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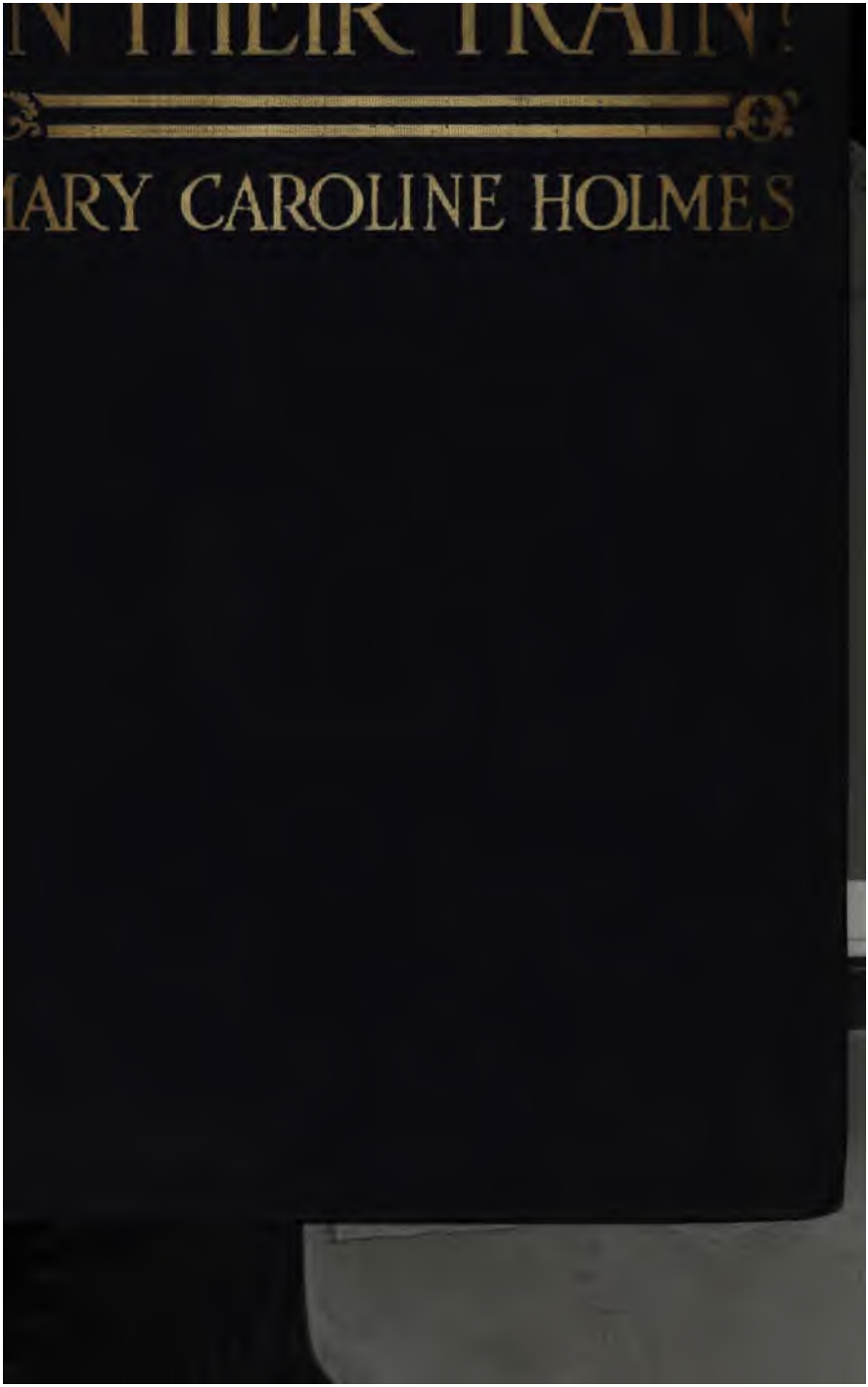
N THEIR TRAIN?

MARY CAROLINE HOLMES



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...lows in Their Train?

A Syrian Romance

by

Mary Caroline Holmes

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"We were cantering down the sands."

(*See p.* 88.)

"Who Follows in Their Train?"

A Syrian Romance

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Mary Caroline Holmes

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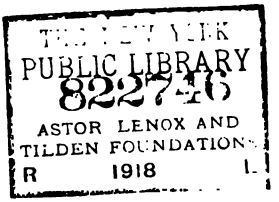

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To the Dear Memory

of

Theodosia Davenport Jessup

The world is a passage way, not a house to dwell in.—Arab Proverb.

CHAPTER ONE

Leaving Constantinople, March 25, 190–

The cleavage is so sharp between the part of my life marked by the twenty-four years left behind me on the White Star dock eleven days ago, and that upon which I am entering, that I am beginning the record at once of the opening chapter of the second instalment of my life story in the Russia-leather blank book you gave me, mother dear. I warn you it won't be a diary, but as near a one-sided talk with you as I can make it.

I do not have the sense of your absence as strong here on this ship moving past the domes and minarets of the old city of Constantine, as I did when you stood on the dock in New York and I on the steamer, unable to touch you although I could see your dear face. I feel somehow that you have come along too, and will help me live this new life. What is the record going to be? Anything worth while?

Up to Constantinople you know. We have been over it all together more than once. The last time we were here, do you remember? how we looked from the windows of the hotel out over the Bosphorus to the Asiatic shore and wondered what it would mean to live there? And here I am to-day on a

Messagerie steamer, moving not too rapidly toward the oldest part of Asia. And not as a tourist, but the secretary-to-be to the President of the S. and S. Company of Trablus.

Sailing under Cyprus.

I will have to confess to you dear Intimate Book, that I have been dreadfully seasick since leaving Constantinople. The Dardanelles, Smyrna, Rhodes are all a blur. Some day perhaps, I'll come this way again, and then can see somewhat more of these places than the little speck framed by my porthole.

To-day has been glorious. I have been out on deck watching the bare, bleak mountains of the Island of Cyprus, wondrously beautiful, ever changing, revealing now a dark gorge with its dry watercourse, here a ruined town and there a fishing hamlet nestling on the seashore. It looks hoary and ancient, as though having passed through the stone age and the bronze age and all the rest, the land had left behind it the tree age too. How bare it is! There are scraps of green here and there, which the Captain tells me are wheat fields, or perhaps stumpy mulberry trees and vines, for silk and grapes are raised here. But how little,—how small it all seems.

To-morrow we shall get in and my journey end. Think of writing Trablus, Syria, Turkey in Asia, at the head of my letters!

Trablus, Syria, Asia.

Mother dear, I was up before daylight and out on deck with the scrubbers, to get the first glimpse of my new home land. Away to the south lie Nazareth and Bethlehem of Judæa and Jerusalem with a hill without the wall whereon once a Cross was set. Ah, and I'll see those places which are only names, perhaps.

As I stood wrapped in my sea-cloak, watching the day dawn against a sky of dissolving night, the snow-capped Lebanon mountains gradually came into view. We seemed to be heading straight for them as though to match our impotent strength of steam and steel with their rocks and crags and towering crests glistening and glowing with the colour bearers of the coming day. One peak stood up majestic and serene above the others, Mt. Sunnin, some one said it was, while somewhat lower and to the south, Keniseh lifted its head as though marshalling the tumbled, crowding lesser peaks and foothills which fell away clear to the sea edge.

Everywhere were signs of life. Numberless villages and towns showed on shore and sloping hill, while the metropolis of this part of the world, Beyrout, stretched itself out into the sea on a low plateau like a crouching giant,—Beyrout with its fine houses, French harbour and railway, automobiles, foreign consulates, golf courses, electric tramway and lights. What a revelation!

As we drew nearer and swung closer in shore, I

could see the buildings of the great American College standing out in the morning light, a determining factor, a fellow passenger told me in the new day dawning for Turkey. I caught a glimpse of the tower of a church in among some trees, which my kind informant said was also American. It looked home-like and reminded me a bit of the one we love on lower Fifth Avenue. But why so much *America* away out here?

At last we steamed slowly through the narrow opening into the harbour, and as I heard the anchor slip into the water, I realized that the old was to be to me the new, and that I had arrived in the Land of Promise. *I* in the Land of Canaan! Fascinated, I watched the crowding boats, the insistent, calling, sweating, barefooted boatmen clambering up the sides of our ship: the colour of the red fezes, the blue Turkish trousers, the gay rugs in the stern and the white awnings over the more pretentious fluccias mingled with the khaki uniforms of the harbour police. From the stern of one trim, white boat whose cushions were covered with linen cool and neat, there blazed the blessed Stars and Stripes, and my heart throbbed and my eyes blurred as I caught sight of it and the wave of a welcoming pith helmet in the hand of cousin David Hackett. It was good to see a kinsman at the end of the long journey, and I was glad of the flag and the welcome, and to be put in a fine touring car and taken to a really good hotel for breakfast, before starting for the

fifty-mile spin to Trablus. The French steamers from Constantinople do not call at any Syrian port before reaching Beyrout. So David ran down to meet me. He says it is not so very long since the last stretch of carriage road was finished over a treacherous, sliding promontory by the sea. Formerly it took two days to reach Beyrout which he did in not more than four hours. Beyrout will keep. Anyway, I did not see much of it excepting the streets we passed through getting out of it. But everywhere the same wonderful colouring,—blue and red predominating, contrasted with the white houses and turbans.

I am too excited to describe the drive up here, and I could not if I tried. I know we whizzed along following the general shore line, past great stretches of mulberry orchards, orange groves, high-arched bridges,—the kind you always see in pictures of the Holy Land,—caught glimpses of market gardens through half-opened gates, saw the pumping station of the Beyrout waterworks before sweeping over a fine modern bridge just above the mouth of the Dog River where the road was flanked by coffeehouses, jessamine embowered with the lure of the flowing, tumbling water from the spillway,—crossing and recrossing a little railway, ever on skirting the beautiful Junieh Bay and through the town of the same name which is full of bustle and energy, passing the Tuberculosis Sanatorium one wise American woman doctor has built, following

the way the Romans went, through towns whose antiquity made me gasp, one of which was the capital of a nation which was old when Joshua crossed the Jordan with the children of Israel, and where Cousin David says was found recently a rude clay Ashtaroth which was worshipped one thousand years before Abraham's time.

I can never forget two phases of that ride,—the part of the road through the Mesailaha Pass—David says that means little arsenal—cut out of the solid rock right over the sea. The promontory was literally pared off some three hundred feet—did he say? and on a splendid roadway we actually hung over the sea dashing and fuming some hundreds of feet below.

The second sight I'll remember as long as life lasts, is that of the great olive groves of the Kura, a broad, fertile plateau which stretches for miles and miles and everywhere silvery grey, twisted olive trees. But oh, the approach to Trablus! We got the intoxicating scent of the orange blossoms long before we could see the city. Mother dear, does Paradise itself hold anything fairer than a grove of orange trees, white with bloom, exhaling odours as though from the gardens of Allah, close by a graceful, arched bridge, commanding a long avenue edged with ancient, silvery olive trees, leading into the city of one's desire?

Dear Intimate Book, I am surfeited with beauty, awed by the towering mountains thrusting their

shoulders up against the sky, and am fairly bewildered by this old Phœnician town girdled with orange and apricot trees in full bloom. To-morrow I will write more. What *is* this old world beauty I have come into?

The next day.

I fell asleep last night with the feeling of having at last attained! If water has any sensation it must be satisfaction at finding its own level. That is my state of mind now.

Cousin Betty's welcome consisted—after the usual preliminaries of talk and dinner, in conducting me to a corner room with four French windows, mind you, after dark. For we talked so much and the dinner was so good after three weeks of steamer fare—I did eat disgracefully much—that I did not really see this charming nest of mine until bedtime. But this morning! Off *there*—sunrise way—is the great frowning castle of Raymond of Toulouse—it is all there flanked miles in the rear by the 10,500 feet-high Lebanon range, glistening and scintillating in the sunlight as far as I can see. And out *there* across a stretch of olive, mulberry and orange trees and sparkling yellow sands is the sea, dimpled and wavy, like a boundless, shining sheet of molten silver which had not cooled evenly. What a combination, mountains, castle, and the Mediterranean Sea! I shall take a spiritual bath every morning when I look at them. Oh *smell* the orange blossoms.

A Saturday.

I shall not attempt to keep account of the days in this record for you, mother. It will be past history when you read it anyway. So what matter whether it was on a Monday or a Friday the things happened I tell you of. It is simply a record of some of the things I do and see and feel. For a whole week nearly I have been finding myself. It must have been in some former incarnation I was an Arab, for I love everything here, even the pink and blue houses and the solemn, slow-pacing Moslem men whose way I have to get out of or be shoved out in passing them in the street. They are oblivious of being discourteous. It is simply the age-long custom which has given men the right of way.

Cousin David thought it well that I get my bearings before beginning work, and I have made the most of my opportunities, going about with Betty seeing things. The city of Trablus lies two miles or so from the sea and is connected with the port, el Mina, by a quaint, mule-drawn tram line. The cars are double decked and divided inside that there be seclusion for the *hareem.* I wish I could picture to you the view we get from the top of the cars. On either side of the roadway are orange gardens exhaling nectar, fenced off by cactus hedges and tall reeds which later on will be topped with feathery plumes shaken by every wind that blows. One of the silk factories Cousin David has to do with is near el Mina, and we are going to see the swiftly

revolving reels winding the cobwebby yellow silk threads from the cocoons as soon as the new crop is ready.

I have not told you that although Cousin David's Company is known as the Soap and Silk Commission Company, they are exporters of all sorts of commodities, doing a large business in oranges, lemons, eggs, olives and olive oil and licorice root, aside from producing raw silk and pure olive oil soap. (The cook washes her dishes and the laundress the clothes in this same olive oil soap.) Each week, at least one steamer leaves the port freighted with their products only. It looks as though I might be busy in that office in el Mina.

Another day.

Fortunately Betty needed something from the market to-day and took me with her. Women are not supposed to go in person to shop in this land. If we want something Selim, Betty's factotum, tells the merchant and he comes to the house with half his shop on the back of a *hammal,* for us to select from. But we are foreign women, and do things the Syrian ladies hesitate to do. We went in state this morning, Selim walking gravely ahead to shoo plodding donkeys and laden camels out of the way, and to prevent the inquisitive children from being too inquiring. What bright eyes they have, and some we met were skipping along, books under their

arms, to the American schools which they tell me are somewhere here.

Oh, dear Intimate Book, I never did love missionaries, mother knows I never did. There is enough of the foreign element right in New York and Brooklyn if one wants to proselyte. But why come so far to do it? and change all this poetic beauty one sees everywhere.

We peeped into the big mosque wherein repose two hairs from Mohammed's beard, but could not enter without taking off our shoes, and unfortunately we do not carry shoehorns in our pockets. So we did not see much. The streets are narrow, but well paved with the gutter in the middle, now passing under a darkish arched place like a small tunnel, and now blossoming into a space where the little shops blaze with exquisite oriental things. Once we passed through a lane of flaming red shoes, into another of yellow ones, which was followed by the black and tan sections. Next we strayed into the resounding copper *suq* (market) where the cooking utensils are hammered into shape and whitened for use. But the silk *suq* was bewilderingly beautiful and where we found the yellows, blues and pinks predominating and always harmonizing. Homs—the old Emesa of the Romans before which Aurelian defeated Zenobia, queen of Palmyra—together with Hamath and Damascus are famous for their silks, all hand woven. Cousin Betty has the most fascinating things like doileys, towels and table covers, the

like of which we never see at home, and all made here.

As we were threading our way through the crowded, narrow streets making for the bridge with its shops like the one in Lucerne, we saw a long string of camels coming. If I am afraid of anything on earth along with snakes, it is a growly, foaming camel. As the head one with its floppy under lip covered with froth came near, it swerved towards me, reaching out its long, bell-bedecked and blue-beaded neck, making that blood-curdling noise in its throat, and I thought my time had come. I jumped back and screamed,—yes, mother, I did—looking wildly about for a Don Quixote, and there one stood, smiling! "Don't be afraid," he said, doffing his helmet, and reining in his white horse, stood between me and that long line of monsters. I was so frightened that I scarcely noticed when the last one had gone by nor that my knight too passed on with a bow to Betty.

"Who is he?" I asked when I had found my breath.

"I don't know. I never saw him before," she replied.

"He does not look like a missionary, does he?" I queried.

Betty laughed. "Wait till you see one," she said.

The very next day.

To-day we have been busy at home. It seemed a bit odd to hear Betty say this morning,

"This is my day at home, Rachel."

"And must we observe conventions out here?" I groaned.

"Why not?" she answered. "All the foreign ladies have a set time to receive formal visits, and I think our Syrian friends like it too, for some of them are adopting the custom. We will have a good many calls I expect, for every one will be curious to see the new lady, and her clothes in the latest style. Besides, all of David's business acquaintances will feel constrained to pay their respects to his cousin."

And they began to come before three o'clock. Oh, mother, I wish you could have seen them. The first caller was what Betty calls "dear Um Fuad," a round, roly-poly Moslem woman, who came in all wrapped in a beautiful, brocaded, black silk robe, with a *thick* veil over her face, and who kissed Betty on both cheeks and me also, and asked how I liked Syria and if I could speak Arabic yet!

Presently I saw her pulling up her dress skirt and fumbling in a pocket hidden away somewhere underneath, from which she extracted a bunch of jessamine and roses on inch-long stems, which she presented to me in a shy, formal manner, saying, "Welcome, welcome to our land." This was followed by an orange for me and one for Betty. It seems

she never comes without some little gift. The Arabs have a proverb, "An empty hand is unclean," and that capacious pocket contains an unfailing supply of rose water for Betty's bottle, apples, nuts, sweets and fragrant posies.

Another curious thing is that both the father and mother of a son lose their own names, excepting for formal occasions, and are known as *Abu* and *Um Fuad,* for instance, "the father and mother of Fuad." Um Fuad would not stay long lest she encounter strange men, and the next one who came was a man whose massive head, with its crown of white hair and flowing beard, made me half believe him to be one of the prophets right out of the Bible. He greeted me with "Thanks be to Allah, thou hast come in peace," and looked at me with such kind, fatherly eyes. Cousin David tells me he is a fine Arabic scholar. I am going to see if he will not teach me Arabic. I simply cannot be tongue-tied, if I am to live out here any length of time, I like to talk too much. Several of the Syrian ladies and men spoke English and French very well, but I wish to talk to everybody—the porters and donkey boys. Who knows? Perhaps I'll want to be a missionary yet! Nay, not I. All the same, I am going to learn how to read and speak Arabic, and find out for myself if the strange sounds I hear on all sides, are blessings or curses. They sound suspiciously like the latter.

At last I have seen a missionary. They all called,

and I was surprised to find them cultivated, well bred, well-dressed people. I lost my heart to one or two of the men,—such splendid, dignified specimens of the kind America produces,—and I'll have to confess I do not see how the belief that only the failures at home go to convert non-Christian people tallies with these men I have seen to-day, who are clearly successes. And as for the women,—but wait until I know them better. My own sex is always problematical, you know.

The grand climax to the day was when Cousin David came in for tea, something he never does, but this time to bring my knight and defender from growly, frothing camels. And now what do you think of that? as the boys in my Sunday School class used to say. John Denise Whitelaw, LL.D., F.R.S., F.R.G.S., etc., etc., (I have supplied the labels. He looks them anyway) he proved to be. An English archæologist on his way to excavate some supposedly Hittite mounds up in Asia Minor somewhere. Observe the ease with which I use these wonderful names, mother of me.

"An almost very tall man, wasn't he, cousin Rachel?" little Caryl quaintly said, Cousin David's seven-year-old son, of whom I have not had time to tell you, but he deserves more than honourable mention. Tall, yes, with the breeding of a well-born Briton, the kind one meets at the week-end parties at country houses in England.

Betty and I did not count at all, after polite in-

quiries as to a complete recovery from the fright of yesterday, other than the pourer and carrier of cups of tea he and Cousin David consumed between the display and examination of some broken, dusty bits of pottery which the archæologist pronounced unlike any he had seen before. David has a liking for odd bits, without knowing their historic value, and had picked up odd pieces because they were queer and ancient. There is a sizable cabinet full of them, and Mr. Whitelaw became so interested in them that he asked if he might examine them carefully some time. He told Cousin David he had already seen in a hasty glance, a larger variety of prehistoric pottery than contained in any museum in Europe. Mind you, mother, these are only fragments of jars, but the vast, limitless past before man began to build houses or wear clothes, and whose tools and weapons were only sharp pieces of stones, can be visualized and made real by these broken bits of sun-baked clay and a flint axe or knife. I foresee my leaning towards the ancients.

Before I realized it, I had drawn near the window where they stood talking and was drinking in all that this wise digger into the hidden past was saying. I really went to fetch his empty cup, and found he had not tasted it yet. Then I lifted up my voice, "Cousin David, don't you expect any more days to follow this one? And must all this be decided this minute? Those pre-historics won't get a whit more

modern if you allow Mr. Whitelaw to drink this cup of hot tea."

They both laughed and came to the tea table, and the Briton, with a grave smile and bow said, "Miss Locke, you must know that a treasure hunter has great exultation when he uncovers that which he seeks. In that cabinet yonder are treasures of great value to science, and some of them I doubt are known to the men at the British Museum. So you will forgive the slight upon your excellent cup of tea, won't you?" said with an easy grace and smile which somehow lit up his dark, deep-set eyes, but made me feel about ten years old. It ended by Betty asking him to stay to dinner, and he and David were still talking when we went to our rooms at ten o'clock, and the train he is to leave by to-morrow for Aleppo starts at 4 A. M!

I am sleepy, I have written long to-night, but somehow life looks big and grand, with a wider horizon than I have ever known before, and in New York I used to pity Cousin David and Betty in this commercial self-exile!

Sunday, April 25th.

Here is a real date for you. I am sitting in my "upper room"—how easy it comes to speak with the tongues of ancient types out here—watching the lazy clouds drift about the mountain tops, now throwing a veil over them as if to hide their glories, now sweeping majestically along and dragging it away

with a dissolving touch as the Syrian sun shines forth in strength. I like Sunday to be a mountain day, a day of vision of the highest, whether it be the everlasting hills with the strength of the Creator holding them in their places, or the everlasting Gospel sustaining the soul.

I have to make a confession. I am going to take back what I said about not liking missionaries. Betty has told me another Arab proverb, "Never blame the absent until he is present." And here I have squeaked my criticism of these self-expatriated people without one bit of knowledge other than what one reads in newspapers about their interference in political matters, and mediocrity and being failures at home and the like.

I did not finish this writing this morning for I suspected I would have more of interest to relate before the day ended. We went to an English service this afternoon at the mission church, and it nearly bowled me over. The church building for one thing was a surprise with its simple stateliness and good architectural lines. Then the organ was more than well played by one of the missionaries. Think of hearing the "Parsifal" Good Friday music away out here! And what a sermon we had,—a great, spiritual, uplifting throb of love and devotion by the president of the college in Beyrout, who is up here for some sort of conference with the missionaries.

Oh, but they were all so kind to me. The head of

the girls' boarding school, a tall, fine-featured woman, who speaks with the sweetest intonation, carried me off to her splendid school building for a cup of tea.

When we emerged through a green lattice gate into the adjoining school grounds, my breath fairly stopped from the loveliness confronting me. Imagine, first of all, a number of tall, tapering cypress trees, like great sentinels on guard, with plane trees taller still against the outside wall which served to accentuate the drooping pepper trees, their feathery branches adorned with clusters of red berries. And can you picture oleanders grown to be really trees covered with pink and white bloom?

In the centre of the garden was a kiosk over which a purple Japanese paper vine flamed with colour. There was a bewildering hedge of calla lilies reaching up to God hundreds of white chalices filled with golden perfume, another of rose geranium and everywhere roses, roses. They clambered away up the side of the building almost to the tower. I could have gathered my arms full of La Frances, and a wonderful white, semi-climbing kind with a scent like honey and a greenish tinge as you looked into its heart. And there were Madame Falcoes and Maréchal Niels and Mermets in the greatest profusion. When we turned to go up the stately winding steps into the building, there was a display of pendulous wistaria blossoms, which surpassed anything I ever saw in the shape of flowers. They

clambered on both sides of the railings to hang myriads of their lavender lanterns: up the side of the house to the top of the tower where hungry bees gorged riotously: reached out and caught the near-by trees and festooned them with the same lavish hand, and kept on bridging the street to intrude their beauty on the neighbours, who gave them a royal welcome and in turn passed on their loveliness and sweetness to *their* neighbours. Does this description give you any conception of it, mother dear? I turned to Miss Delight, (that is my name for her. You can look in the Board's reports for her real name), and said, "Is this how you pave your way into Syrian hearts, through an avenue of riotous colour and intoxicating scents? No wonder they call you the most successful missionary out here."

"My dear," and I wish you could have seen her deprecatory smile as she spoke, "the soul is reached through the gates of delight and joy as well as through the intellect. And besides, one must have something outside of actual work in this far-away land as a stabilizer. Why, child," and the smile was tremulous, "there is not an hour in the day there does not come crowding in on me some vision of green fields and maple woods and winding rivers and full brooks, and my childhood's home on the farm in New England. Did you ever sing 'America' with the tears rolling down your cheeks from sheer home-sickness for your native land? Ah, my flowers are my consolers." How the light of that woman's

soul shone in her fine eyes as she went on, for I could not speak. "But, Miss Locke, what is it all compared with one young heart started out rightly equipped to fight life's battles—simply the privilege of giving to my sisters here from the fullness we American women have in unstinted, overflowing measure, is compensation enough, and I would not change my lot with any other woman on earth."

We were seated in her plainly furnished sitting room by now, drinking tea brought by a bright-faced maid, whom Miss Delight told me she had taken to bring up.

"Will you tell me," I queried, "wherein lies your motive power for all this work? I can understand the desire to give people a chance to learn to read and write and to get some of our Western culture, the depth of which I sometimes question, but why—is there not enough of this same foreign element at home? Why come so far to do it?"

She was silent for a minute, her eyes cast down—a way she has when thinking—then raising them aflood with inner fire and purpose said softly, her hand on mine, "Dear unbeliever in missionaries, there is only one answer to that—because I believe that Whose I am and Whom I serve, wants me to do it, and do it in this way and in this place." I was dumb in the presence of such sublime faith even though I could not understand it. After I could command my voice I asked,

"And how long have you been doing it?"

"Thirty-six years and more."

"And you have been home how many times?"

"Three," she said simply. There came a knock just then, and rising, she explained,

"I must be rude and dismiss you now, as this is the hour when my helpers come to me and we talk over problems in the work and take counsel of our Lord. Will you come and see me again?"

Mother Locke, did you know how small a soul your child has, and how dwarfed her conception of life is compared with that saint's in the big, brown schoolhouse? To-morrow I begin my work, typewriting, bookkeeping, etc. May I do my job as well as she does hers.

And here ends the first chapter of my life away from you under Syrian skies. The Russia-leather book is full—it is not very large, and I am sending it by the first mail, on Tuesday. Mother, mother, am I going to be of any real use here?

He who teacheth that which is good and doeth not accordingly, is likened unto a blind man carrying a lamp. He lighteneth others, but not himself.—Arabic Proverb.

CHAPTER TWO

Early one morning.

Cousin David's office is in el Mina—el means *the* and Mina, *harbour* or *port,* and the window near my desk gives me a view of the sea—limitless, with the farther shore no nearer than Sandy Hook. I close my eyes sometimes and see the steamer I shall come home by swinging through the Narrows and up the Bay, with all the sky-scrapers waving welcoming, beckoning hands from every window. Then Cousin David's buzzer buzzes and I fly into his room to take orders for the making out and filing of invoices for bales of raw silk consigned to France or licorice root or something else to some other country. His windows command the mountains and I always try to get a peep at them before going back to do his bidding with neatness and despatch.

Mother dearest, I have been so engrossed with getting my hand in, that I have neglected to make other than the above small beginning in Volume Two of the plum-coloured Russia-leather edition of the oriental part of my history. Cousin David's illness—was it not lucky I had been here a couple of months when he elected to have typhoid?—is keep-

ing me more than busy with all I have had to do. Fortunately he isn't very ill, and from behind the carbolic-sheet-hung door in his isolation camp in the prophet's chamber on the roof, can send down instructions to me whenever I get stuck. I haven't made many mistakes that amount to anything, excepting one, and that was big enough to last for some time. I consigned some hundreds of kilos of licorice root to a silk factory in Lyons, France, and the same number of bales of raw silk to a drug firm in London, and actually shipped them, too! We only learned to-day that through the kindness of the respective firms the two commodities finally reached their rightful destinations.

It has been impossible to get a nurse for David, and poor Betty has had everything to do for her husband. There is only one foreign trained nurse in the country, and she, of course, was busy on a case. When I get back to America, I am going to see that some adequate provision is made for sick foreigners. Everything seems to be done for "the people."

We were beginning the fourth week of Cousin David's illness when a letter came from Mr. Whitelaw asking if it would be a convenient time for him to accept Betty's oft-repeated invitation to stop with us for a few days, while he cleared from the customs some supplies which had arrived from England. He has been back and forth several times during the past months, always dropping in for a cup of tea and an envious look at the pre-historics

in the case. Betty brought his letter to me for a reply, and I wrote him a very nice note asking him to postpone his visit till such time as we could show him a clean bill of health. Instead, what did the man do, but come on at once and take charge of us all, David included, and has been the greatest possible comfort and help. Everybody out here is so human and mutually helpful. Little Caryl was taken at once into one of the missionary homes where there is a houseful of children, the Winthrops, and is having the time of his life, he says.

Mr. Whitelaw is interesting in a way, now that one has him at close range, full of lore, specializing of course, in Hittites, but once or twice has shown such human interest in other things, that I'd like to know what lies under the surface of his rather austere manner. I was making tea the afternoon he came and had lighted the brass kettle in the drawing-room, and stood listening to him describe the finding of a Hittite palace up at his diggings, when I happened to glance down and saw my clean white dimity frock blazing, the flames creeping, running up towards my face. I gave a frightened gasp, I suppose, for he cried, "Don't move," and the next thing I knew his hands gripped me and he was wrapping something around me. I must have lost consciousness for a moment in that silly way I have when frightened, for his voice came to me from so far away that it seemed to shake and to be without that calmness it usually has.

"That was a close call, child," he said, and his voice was low and very gentle. Child! That recalled my scattered senses, and I found myself again, and that I was standing steadied by his strong arms, and wrapped in his coat. The front of my dress was a black mass.

"Come over to the *chaise longue* and rest, won't you? And I'll call Mrs. Hackett."

"No, please, I'll be quite myself in a minute. I am so sorry," I tried to say. Oh, mother darling, if you had been here you would have understood. He looked at me as though deciding what to do next, and then did it—he picked me up and placed me on the lounge and threw the afghan over my charred skirt.

"You are not burned at all I think, Miss Locke, but"—and with one of those rare, reluctant smiles lighting his grave face, "it is my turn now," and proceeded to make the tea, for the kettle was boiling over.

"I'll show you how I have learned to do things at the diggings." Then Betty came running into the room exclaiming, "I smell something burning. Is it here? Rachel, what is it? Why are you lying down? Why, Rachel dear," as I began to cry.

Mr. Whitelaw was bringing me a cup of tea, and stood beside me, his hand on my trembling arm with a steady pressure and said quietly, "She tried to burn herself up, Mrs. Hackett. Fortunately I was in the room, but she will need a new frock I fear."

Dear Betty, how she comforted and petted me, and even cried a little herself, and when she seized Mr. Whitelaw's hand to thank him, I saw him wince.

"Come here," I commanded, suddenly stronger. "You are the one who is burned. Oh, Betty, look at the palm of his hand," holding it between both mine. "He saved my life," I sobbed quite unnerved.

He gently withdrew his smarting hand and looked at me with that newborn smile of his, and for the second time said *child.* "It is nothing, my child. But promise that you will extinguish your match another time, especially if no one is in the room with you, will you?" Afterwards he seemed to lapse into his cold, dignified manner, but once or twice I have caught him looking at me as though to make sure he had thoroughly done his work of rescue.

I had not hitherto taken enough interest in Mr. W. to tell you what he looks like. Until he came to be in the house with us, I really had not paid much attention to him, excepting to note that he was tall and had dark, deep-set eyes. His hair, I have discovered, is fair and waves a little, and his hands are shapely and well cared for, the hands of a musician rather than those of a grubber in the ashes of the past. His dress is always correct, and by the way the shoulders set up, I should think nothing less than the work of a tailor not far from Bond Street. His personality is rather pleasing when one gets to know

him, but it has taken a long time to get a little teeny way under his austere surface manners. And how old is he? Perhaps thirty, perhaps forty, I don't know. You see I am busy at the office during the day, and he insists that Betty shall sleep at night and let him care for David, who is rapidly regaining his health. He is kindness itself to both Betty and me, and I fancy is the kind who makes friends slowly, but once made, they last as long as life.

That episode of nearly burning to death has shaken me more than I care to admit, even to you, my intimate book, mother is to see. The horror of it seems to haunt me especially at night when a flame enveloped me holds back my slumbers, and I watch in my disordered fancy those creeping, running fingers of fire. I somehow feel Mr. Whitelaw is aware of this abnormal state of my nerves, for he is so very watchful of my comfort, an indefinable something, an unobtrusive taking care, which seems to enwrap me, especially when I come home from the office, quite tired out with carrying the whole responsibility of Cousin David's business.

The missionaries were so lovingly kind when they heard of all our troubles, and not a day passes but some token of their sympathy and thoughtfulness reaches us. My Miss Delight came running in today—the girls' school is quite near—and insisted on my going home with her for over Sunday. I am in the quiet chamber next hers now, and must go to bed lest I keep her awake.

Morning.

The guest room faces the sunset, with a view embracing orange gardens, mulberry groves and the yellow, sand-fringed sea, stretching out into the west and America on its farther shore. There is a small flat-roofed house over the garden wall, which has a veranda embowered with yellow jessamine which sends its delicate odours through the open windows (I did not tell you there is a tall spine of tuberoses on my dressing table), and a woman, her hair in two long braids, is seated on the floor sewing, her Singer hand machine on a low table beside her. A fat, chubby boy is playing there too, taking bites now and then from a flat loaf of bread he has in one hand. Around the ledge of the veranda are tins—the kind kerosene oil comes in, in which various plants are growing. I noticed egg shells on sticks in some of them, in others the shine of blue beads tied on the branches. Miss Delight tells me these are fetishes to keep off the evil eye! And that must explain why the horses and mules wear necklaces of blue beads.

I was going to say I could understand a little why they need some one to tell them a better way about some things, when I remembered that we Westerns are not devoid of superstition and the outward expression of it. There is knocking on wood, for instance, and an old shoe some horse cast to be picked up and nailed over a gate or front door, and the rabbit's foot, and father always carried a horse-

chestnut, you know, in his pocket to ward off rheumatism, and the four-leaf clover, etc. There must be some other reason why the people here need missionaries. While the service in Arabic was going on, I wandered about in the garden, the garden of delights, its beauty changing with the seasons. Just now it is aglow with chrysanthemums, and to my joy I found the little clustered hearts of gold artemisias, and other autumnal flowers of the far-away home gardens, gardens of memory now, wherein is the smell of white grapes and Northern Spy apples. Do you remember in heavenly Deanston?

To-night.

Last night, or this morning rather, I had a new sensation. Do you recall the muezzin's cry in old Stambul? We listened to it that first time with amused curiosity, thinking rather contemptuously perhaps, of human energy being employed when resounding bronze might be substituted and would be heard farther. That has been my mental attitude ever since I came here to dwell for these three years, but this morning, above my dreams, just as the wonder of the waking day showed in the east, I heard stealing along with the dawn, a voice, pulsating, floating like a thing with wings, which other voices answered, echoing, repeating, now in chorus now in antiphones, till they seemed to circle round and round the slender minarets and whitened domes,—everywhere, winged, palpitating voices calling, call-

ing "Come to prayer, come to prayer, prayer is better than sleep," and the mystery and compelling power of the floating, spoken, human word,—a personal invitation to the sleeping thousands, became something alive and pregnant with a new meaning, so that I shall wait and listen for the *Adan,* each time of the five every day. Here is something which cannot be improved, and I am wondering if from church towers and spires at home, there should resound a worship proclamation instead of iron-throated bells, what would be the effect. I know one thing,—mosques are always full, while the reverse is true of churches in America. Who knows, if this seventh-century way of telling men there are stated times to repair to their several places of worship were employed, they might not go to church more. What do you think?

And I have an idea that the human touch, the personality of the calling voice on the little, narrow stone balcony, high up above the street noises, is a factor more or less potent, in the assembling process. I have learned that what the world wants is not a dead, historic Christ, nor a buried Mohammed, but a living, personal voice and touch, "a hand like to my hand" to quote our friend and teacher Browning. I am beginning to see, also, that there is a place for the missionaries here. We *have* a message to give to the whole world, we Americans, and I think it must be rather a joyful thing to be big enough and great enough in one's self to be asked to be a mes-

senger. I want you to know these splendid people out here, the Americans I mean, big souled, broad visioned, deep thinking, who have given up much for "His dear sake," as they love to sing. One of them could have been Ambassador to a land not very far off, if he had chosen to accept,—the President asked him to,—and a certain college wanted him for the chair of, I have forgotten what, but he declined. "This one thing I do," he said, "preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the people to whom I have been sent of God." And yet not one of them will own it is any hardship to live these lives of self-sacrifice and expatriation. I think they are the happiest people on earth, I do really.

I am not giving you events in chronological order, but as I have time to jot them down for you, you dear, far-away mother. I feel like telling you to-night of a conversation I had recently with Doctor Saleeby, who cared for David in his illness, and who has an English wife, a very charming sort of person she is, too. We were talking about the rumours afloat as to an uprising against the Christians in certain parts of Asia Minor—an omnipresent dread, which has become an actuality all too often. The scars of one terrible massacre are still to be seen. There are many now living who were eyewitnesses to the butchery and savagery of the carnage and pillage. I denounced to Dr. Saleeby such an awful state of affairs. "How can such a government live?" I exclaimed. "Why in my country——"

"Pardon me," my Syrian doctor said, "I am no lover of the Turk. Neither is the Moslem of Arab blood. But you must know there are Moslems and Moslems, just as there are Americans and Americans. According to the newspapers, even in your country, which boasts as its basic principle of government that all men are created equal, you have lynchings and race riots sometimes, which appear to outsiders strange anomalies in a land where good government obtains. We have iniquitous massacres. But as I see it, the spirit which animates ten or twelve men to lead in the execution of mob law upon a suspected or condemned black man, and that of an infuriated Kurdish horde is one and the same. The immeasurable difference between the two acts is this —our Kurd knows no law but his own inflamed passionate hate and lust,—your American knows better, has ample law and justice to control and punish his victim. He who received most is the worst offender, is he not, in God's sight?"

"I must admit your argument is good," I replied. "All the same, the lynching of one person cannot be such a crime against civilization as the indiscriminate killing of unoffending masses of the population simply because you do not like their religion."

"All true, perhaps," the Syrian replied, "and yet you must acknowledge that the motive which prompts both massacre and lynching is one and the same—hate, in the one case of a man's colour and race, in the other of his race and religion."

I was loath to admit that I had been beaten in the argument, but to be frank with you, such was the case, and so I changed the subject.

"Dr. Saleeby, where did you study medicine?" I queried.

"At the American College in Beyrout, after I had taken the arts course there."

"Have you ever been in Europe?" I next asked. He smiled as he made answer.

"I studied in Vienna for a year after a post-graduate course at Johns Hopkins."

"No wonder you speak English so well," I exclaimed in amazement.

"My mother was an English woman, Miss Locke, and knew little Arabic, and of course, I have relatives in England whom I see frequently. Besides my father was descended from Crusading stock. That is what Saleeby means, crusader."

"Then why," I began eagerly. He smiled at me again.

"I have asked myself that many times—why not live in a more civilized country?" There were tempting offers in America, but the lure of the Lebanon was in my blood. 'If you've 'eard the East a callin', you won't never 'eed naught else,' you know. And besides, if my country is ever to rise, to attain to greater things, it must be from within, and by the efforts of her sons. I have no sympathy with those who desire one of the European Powers to

take Syria. My vision is of a Syria for the Syrians, —a self-governing State."

"Do you see any indications of such a thing coming to pass?"

"Many," he quietly replied. "The great determining factor at present is education. It is to the various mission schools we owe much of the light we now have. The College in Beyrout is one of the most potent, perhaps I should say, the greatest influence for the good of the community in all Syria to-day."

This began to be more than interesting. I was finding out things.

"In what way," I asked, "does the teaching of the College make for progress? It surely cannot inculcate insurrection and rebellion against the government, however bad, which allows it to carry on its work."

"Quite the contrary," he asserted. "The College is teaching patriotism, something unexpressed in the Turkish language."

"Tell me, is all this progress due to the efforts of American Missionaries?"

"No, not all, but in large measure. The College while not connected with any Board of Missions, was created by the American missionaries, who had a vision broad enough to hand it over to a separate board of trustees, that it be not hampered in its expansion. The American missionaries have the best equipped plant, and most up-to-date, and their

schools are more numerous than those of other nationalities. Did you know that the Turkish Empire contains an even dozen of colleges, founded by your compatriots, not to mention the numbers of secondary boarding and day schools, as well as innumerable village schools. The English have some good schools, one or two of superior excellence. In Palestine proper, the Americans have held aloof, for the most part."

"What are the Roman Catholics doing, anything?"

"Much. They have schools and convents everywhere. This land has been the refuge of monastic orders driven from other lands. The Friars are great educators, as are the Jesuits. The latter have a finely equipped university in Beyrout, which is connected with the University of Paris. The Russians, too, have splendid schools, and the Germans, with a few hospitals and orphanages, are doing much good. Even the Danes have pushed out next the desert where no one else has gone. Now, Miss Locke, do you not see towards what all this is trending? An educated, self-respecting people, and please God, in time a self-governing one."

"Dr. Saleeby, is it not true that Islam has remained wholly untouched by Christianity?"

"Quite untrue," was his earnest rejoinder. "Protestant Christianity is vitally affecting Mohammedanism. Their leaders know this and are more than anxious. Since the Bible was put into the majestic

Arabic of the Koran, it has been circulated widely among the studious and thoughtful, with results which will bear unexpected fruit one day. I could name many who are devout believers in the teachings of Jesus, and who accept Him as their Saviour. Besides, there is a large number, especially men, who have lost their grip on Mohammed's teachings, and are drifting, they care not whither. But there will come a day when there will be an upheaval and an overturning, and it will come from within. What has been accomplished has not been the work of missionaries. It has come through reading the Bible. It is the call of Almighty God to a people in part a remnant of Israel mayhap,—all children of Abraham at any rate, *and it will be heard.*"

"But surely, the Turkish Government has some system of education. How is it they tolerate the presence of numberless schools conducted by foreigners, who cannot but inculcate ideas alien to Eastern thought."

"The policy of the Turkish Government has resulted in keeping the people in ignorance. But remember, please, that learning is indigenous among the Arab peoples, who are in subjection to the Othman Turks, a clever, astute race, just beginning to emerge from its mediæval dimness of perception. Given time and non-interference from the grabbing European Powers, Christian so-called, I have faith to believe they have it in them to rise to a worthy place among the nations of the earth, and given

also the opportunity, I would like to be one of the many Christians who are like minded, to help my native land awake."

"But I thought," I objected, "that you were anxious to be under Christian rule."

"We are, but with religious freedom, an open uncensored press, educated officials ruling after modern methods and a representative government in which we Christians shall have a part, I believe we may have a stable national government irrespective of creed." I have tried to give you as near a verbatim report of this extraordinary conversation as possible, for it shows how little outsiders know of actual conditions in the Near East.

One Day.

A few days ago there came an invitation from Doctor Otis, the one who opened the only Sanatorium for tuberculosis in this part of the world. We were all asked, Mr. Whitelaw included, that we might meet the new American Consul General. I was keen about going, as Doctor Rahmy, as every one affectionately calls her, has done a unique work, quite alone, and being in the process of remaking my ideas and opinions, I was desirous of seeing if things and conditions were as I had been told. I should say that Dr. Otis's name is Mercy,—as though her mother had an intuition of the future calling of her child when she named her, and the quick-witted people out here learned that Mercy

meant their word Rahmy, so she is never known here by any other name than Dr. Rahmy. Is it not beautiful, when you know what she is doing? Her house is about ten or fifteen miles this side of Beyrout, and as we had been asked to come early that we might inspect the Sanatorium before the one o'clock dinner, we started betimes.

The drive in the inverse direction over the same road I came to Trablus by in the spring, seven months ago, was as full of enjoyment as though I had never passed that way before. Everywhere nature had rehabilitated herself after the parched, dry summer when not a drop of rain fell from the 12th of April until nearly the first of October, which explains why there are so many dry watercourses.

The hard rains had eliminated the thick coat of dust worn by the olive trees all summer and polished up each shining silver-grey leaf, while the wayside grasses and flowers already look up expectantly. I saw the mottled leaves of the cyclamens peeping from the crannies and spreading themselves around their clinging places in the clefts of the rocks. In this land there are rocks and rocks and rocks, as though the surplus of creation had been dumped here. A pretty bit of Syrian folk lore says, that when God created the world, He sifted the sand over the desert, but the stones one sees everywhere were too coarse to go through His sieve, so He threw them out over Syria. You would believe it, too, if you could see the *jells*—terraces—where they

sow wheat, and which we saw being ploughed. The soil is covered thick in most places with small stones the size of my fist, and one wonders how anything can grow under such conditions. And yet they tell me fair crops of wheat, barley and millet are raised.

One view to-day was enchanting. We wound down the wonderful road with its corners and curves after leaving the Kura and its olive trees, through the growing town of Shikka, passing for perhaps a mile through a straight avenue between splendid market gardens and orchards, to the beautiful bay at the foot of the promontory over which the carriage road passes. How blue the sea looked, in which the white sails of the fishing boats just come to anchor were reflected as in a mirror. Away to the north the coast stretched to el Mina and far beyond, showing old, bald, seamy Mt. Turbul rising seemingly from the water's edge, as though to defy man to attempt to enter its territory, and to protest against the invading railroad which skirts its base to push eastward towards the desert. Cousin David says it is only a matter of a very few years ere that same railroad arrives at for the present, an unnamed terminus, and then one will be able to take a train marked Bombay, via Homs, Palmyra, Bagdad and Karatchi. But before that happens it will be possible to entrain at Trablus and get out at Paris or Vladivostock!

Once more we traversed that wonder of a road carved on the side of the mountainous cliff over the

sea, down the other side through a progressive town called el Batrun, with a Crusader castle and attractive modern houses with red tile roofs. At one point we passed many fig orchards, with their misshapen trees looking as though the wind never blew but from one direction. Then over a splendid sweep of road showing the beautiful town of Amshit, where the sister of Ernest Renan is buried, while away before us sprawled Jebail, the Byblos of the Greeks and Gebal of the Bible. It too, has a wonderful castle as well as a fine cathedral church built by the Crusaders.

As we had been but an hour or so coming thus far, Cousin David said he would like to stop and see a man with whom he has dealings in silk. And here I had the surprise of my life. We had left the car with Deebna, the chauffeur, and strolled down a road leading to the sea, when we came upon a most splendid house, quite the finest I have seen out here. It plainly was somebody's home, for there was a high picket fence in front of a gorgeous garden of flowers, with a mosaic walk through the middle leading up to a green front door. Betty and I stopped and poked our faces between the pickets and gazed and looked at the exquisite flowers and feathery, towering pepper trees. While we were thus occupied that green door opened and a lady came out with a basket and garden shears. She did not see us at first, but when she came towards a splendid bush of La France roses near the fence, she spied

us and said, "May I give you a rose?" I did not answer but tore into that garden crying, "It is Kate Morgan! Where under the sun?" And she,—"Rachel Locke! Have the skies fallen?" Mother, imagine it, my room-mate at college out here. I knew it all the time, but had somehow got it into my head that she had gone to India. *Well,* we did not go any farther, but sat on a balcony where we could watch for Cousin David, and at the same time see almost the rest of God's world spread out like an immense picture, with Beyrout from across a wide bay, stretching its lazy length into the sea. And what is Kate doing here? As near as I could find out, whatever her hand finds to do, and that seems to be many things. We saw her schools, and industrial work and then Cousin David came and we had to go, but not till she had my promise for a week-end visit very soon.

When we got to Aintain we found the guests assembled, and it was a joy to see that doctor woman, Mercy personified, going from bed to bed greeting the poor, dying consumptives. It seems some of the people are dreadfully afraid of tuberculosis, and it *is* a terrible thing, and in their terror lest the others of the household get it, they isolate those so afflicted, making them comfortable enough, but alone sometimes to meet the last awful moment. They are often placed in a small tent in a pine grove, ~~if one~~ is at hand, and there left, where frequently they improve in the pure air. But Doctor Mercy

could not have that go on, and all such are sought out by this good woman, brought here and lovingly cared for and made comfortable, while more than one has been restored and quite cured. One of the guests asked the doctor how she came to found the Sanatorium, and she held us spellbound as she narrated a wonderful tale, although heart-breaking.

Near her own house is a cave inhabited by a half demented woman, who implicitly believes in the protection of St. John the Baptist. The floor of her cave she has divided into rooms as a child marks off his garden with white pebbles. There is a sitting room and bedroom and tiny kitchen and a guest room, in which she placed her best bed, a poor enough mattress, on the ground.

"Then I prayed to St. John Baptist to send me a guest because I was so lonely," the poor old thing said. "And one day a man came carrying a sick woman on his back, whom he placed on the ground and departed. Oh, 'welcome, welcome,' I said and knew that my prayers had been answered. But my guest did not heed me, but wept and wailed, 'Ya ibny, ya ibny, how canst thou leave thy mother thus?' I soon found she was far gone with the dreadful *sill* and tried to comfort her. She was very weak, and I made her sit on the bed in my guest room and drink some of the soup I had for my supper. But she could only weep and say, *Ya ibny, ya ibny,* 'oh, my son.' And then I told her about the Good Shepherd I had heard of from the

doctor lady, and how He said, 'I shall not want.' But my guest was too far gone to listen much, I thought. Just before the dawning of the morning, she turned her face to the wall, and listening I heard her say, 'I shall not want,' and with a sigh gave back her spirit to God." "Why did I open this place?" the doctor added. "The need and desolation of that one woman built this sanatorium."

Mr. Whitelaw, who had been standing near me during this recital, which left us choked and silent, said, as if to himself, "And you and I have no part nor lot in these stupendous undertakings," and turned abruptly to the window, from which the sea could be seen rolling in great billows, which roared and dashed and fumed on the rocks below.

I plucked at his sleeve, "Why should you mind being left out of this? You are not a doctor; you have other work in the world."

"And though I am but a digger, may I not feel a throb of pity for suffering and sorrow, and long to alleviate it if I can?" he gravely inquired.

"Yes, and I too am sad over such conditions, but I love my native land where there is sorrow and suffering also, and sick foreigners and all the rest. One may work along these same lines there," I weakly answered.

"Miss Locke, responsibility is a solemn word, and I very much fear you nor I have a right to say we have yet found it in our dictionaries. This is *life*, this work, don't you see it? I have had a lesson

set me to-day, which I must con well,—and you too," he added softly with that hidden smile as he looked at me.

Fortunately Doctor Mercy led the way back to her house before I could frame a reply which fitted the occasion, and the walk was a silent one. I wonder, wonder about so many things out here.

The dinner was sumptuous which was awaiting us. The *pièce de resistance* was a lamb cooked whole, stuffed with chopped meat, rice and nuts and raisins. The man servant dissected it without knife or fork, *à la arab,* a most curious sight, tearing the flesh with much skill. The meat was delicious as was a preparation of rice rolled up in grape leaf jackets and served with *lebin,* the "curds" every one eats out here.

After we had eaten all we thought possible, there was brought in the national dish without which no feast is complete,—*kibbie,* wheat and meat pounded for hours in a great stone mortar and then placed in copper trays, layer-cake fashion, the filling being chopped meat, onions and pine seeds, with quantities of *semin,* the native butter, after which it is baked in a public oven. You cannot think how good it is. And mother, as I ate this dish they told me that for ages the people of this land have eaten it. King Solomon did, for he speaks of it in his words of wisdom, "Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will

not his foolishness depart from him." Look it up in Proverbs, 27:22.

Speaking of food, I have eaten the kind of pottage Esau sold his birthright for, and really, it is so good that if one were very hungry, "hungry as a hunter," which was poor Esau's state, and where that saying probably originated, such a vague thing as who was the elder of a pair of twins, might easily give place to so satisfying a dish as *majeddra,* made of lentils mainly, cooked in this pure olive oil, with onion rags on top,—onions sliced across and quite thin and fried crisp and brown. This eaten with a salad with fresh mint in it is worth a twin's primogeniture.

These people know how to cook, their sweets especially, are amazingly delicious. The most delectable kind is a sort of layer cake with cream filling baked between two fires, as its name indicates, *kenaifeh b'narain.* I also like very much *buqlaweh.* (When you see a q in a word transliterated from the Arabic it means you are to start to pronounce it k, and somehow manage to swallow it in the process of enunciation, calling it koff.) This latter sweet is another sort of layer cake, as many as thirty layers of tissue-paper thin pastry, with a thick one at the bottom of chopped nuts and things. It is most delicious. We had some to-day. I wish I could send you a piece.

The other day Um Fuad came to call and out of that capacious pocket of hers drew a glass jar of

what must have dropped down from the angels' pantry, for I am sure mortals never thought of taking orange petals to make preserves. You cannot imagine anything nearer nectar than these eaten hot, with cream.

There is just room left in my second Russia-leather book to write *finis*.

The world knoweth the ignorance of the ignorant, but the ignorant knoweth not that the wise is wise.—Arab Proverb.

CHAPTER THREE

Thanksgiving Night.

How did I ever get the courage to put myself where I could not get home for Thanksgiving? I did not reckon on the holidays when I bound myself for three years out here. There are just twenty-seven more months before I sail away for HOME and YOU. Yes, I am as homesick as I ever want to be. Oh, how I have missed you to-day. It seems so far to America. We have had a celebration and it is time to go to bed, and you have not yet had dinner. We observed the day in the dear home way, as near as we could, but it wasn't home no matter how hard we tried to make it seem so. We all knew we were aliens in a land which had never kept Thanksgiving, because it has no reason to be very thankful for much of anything, so far as one can see, when our point of view is taken.

The Americans take turns having the dinner, and this year it was at the Winthrops', where we went after a service in the chapel. The Winthrop house is like all houses here,—a big central court with the rooms opening out of it. There were so many of us that the table was laid in the court, and when we marched in, small Ted Winthrop leading with

his drum, it was as though we had stepped into, oh, that blessed America where you are and I *wish* I was this minute. There was a runner down the centre of the table of Dennison crêpe paper with flags and shields on it, a doily at each plate to match, and standing at attention in the glasses was a serviette folded to display the flag.

When we reached our places and stood for the blessing, some one started "My Country 'Tis of Thee." I glanced up after swallowing hard two or three times, and if I had not been so busy trying to make my voice less wobbly so as to carry the tune, at the same time mopping away the salt, homesick tears, I could have laughed, the grown-ups looked so tragic. The men mostly gazed ceilingward, and the women at their plates with an air of determination to somehow get through without breaking down, for every one was furtively wiping away tears. Those blessed folk, home lovers every one, but humanity lovers and Jesus lovers a thousandfold more. The last word sung, no one stirred until Dr. Winthrop had talked with God about our home land in a very tender, longing voice, asking blessings for "all in authority," not forgetting "His Majesty, the King of Great Britain," for Mr. Whitelaw's sake, and the Sultan "of the land in which we live."

Have I told you about Mrs. Winthrop? She is most charming, with a swarm of children, the eldest only twelve. She is a graduate of Vassar, too, was valedictorian of her class, I believe, and has acquired

the Arabic in a remarkable way they tell me. Her housekeeping is something beautiful, and her cookery delicious and toothsome. The dinner was excellent to-day. Let me tell you about it. There was a big fowl she raised herself and cranberry jelly (tinned), sweet potatoes (tinned), corn (tinned), and salad out of her garden. She had made with her own hands mince and pumpkin (tinned) pies, and when her man servant was bringing them to the table he tripped on the steps leading from the kitchen and dropped both of them and they were irrevocably smashed! You should have heard the men groan when she came running back after investigating the crash, and announced the awful news. Then she as quickly disappeared again and after we had waited a quarter of an hour, she slipped into her place and in came the man, with a flaming plum pudding (tinned), which she had kept in her store room against an emergency. We all cheered and enjoyed the Huntly and Palmer production to the limit of the last crumb.

Dinner over, we played games,—the old home kind, and had an uproarious time. Fancy playing "Going to Jerusalem," with the real Jerusalem just around the corner. I never realized before what a purely American feast Tranksgiving is until to-day. Coming home, Mr. Whitelaw said, "I like the way you Americans do things. We feel thankful too, in England, but somehow we never do as you have done to-day."

"Yes, I know," I answered him. "But when our forefathers, who were English you remember,—inaugurated this custom, there was great reason to give thanks. The men who made our nation were not cradled in soft beds."

"Is that the reason these Americans out here are made of such unusual stuff?"

"Perhaps. They are certainly rare, and—holy," under my breath.

Night.

I am always interested in coming home from the office in watching the men at the half-way place where the tram cars pass on the switch, prepare for sunset prayers. Islam, whatever defects we may find in it, is certainly not ashamed of itself. To pray is not only a duty, but a part of its being. There is a wide platform under some Pride of India trees, a solidly built thing, with a tank of running water for the obligatory ablutions, without which no man presents himself before his God. And I see how they clean out their mouths, too, before beginning to pray. Then, shoes left behind, they stand or kneel on their coat or girdle in lieu of a rug, their faces toward Mecca, quite regardless of onlookers. It is always impressive, this strict observance of the times of prayer.

And speaking of water, I have not yet told you about that of Trablus, which seems to me more or less of a joke, it is so unreasonably impure. No one

of the foreign residents dares use it before boiling or at least passing it through a filter. You cannot imagine anything more primitive than the method by which it is introduced into the houses. The fountain head is pure enough, but that is some hours from the city, and it is allowed to meander in an open aqueduct—don't imagine anything canalized like the Rhone in Switzerland, but more as a brook flows through fields and by the roadside, until it nears the city, where it crosses the river by means of an arched aqueduct, very ancient, dating probably from Roman times. Once across, it disappears underground to flow through a stone ditch and be distributed in *birkeys* in the houses into which it flows, in and out. There is always the sound of running water wherever you go.

There are several openings into the underground water ways called *beeyara,* "wells," and one day when we were out walking back of the castle we found quite a crowd collected around one, which presently passed near us, surrounding a weeping woman carrying her little daughter, who had fallen in and had just been found after hours of search.

The other day the water was cut off practically all day while they hunted for a donkey which had managed to stumble in. They found it at last, but oh my, think what we drank before the beast was missed, a matter of three days, I believe. But one might as well be philosophical about it, for when a break in the aforesaid ditch occurs, a donkey-load

of manure is dumped in to seek out and clog up the breach. We can always tell when repairs are on, by the barnyard taste in the water! And New Yorkers eschew Croton water and buy bottled stuff, deeming the former not clean enough!

An Evening.

To-day we had a donkey ride, even C. D. (hereafter C. D. instead of Cousin David, which consumes time to write out fully) went, and Caryl, who has a beautiful Bagdad donkey, white as milk with a gait as easy as the sway of a rocking chair, was grand marshal and led the way. I rode a mouse-coloured one, the kind with a cross on its back,—darker hair along the back bone and across the shoulders making a perfect cross, which tradition says appeared after Joseph took the Virgin Mary and her little Son on one to Egypt.

There was a long row of us trotting briskly on the broad carriage road making for the Beddaweh, a pool wherein is a great quantity of sacred fish. Just why they are sacred no one seems to know, save that a vow was made in the dim past that the fish in that pool were never to be eaten. It is considered a sin to catch them, and if anyone should be so wicked as to purloin one, it would fly out of the frying pan straight to Mohammed! The result of this belief is there are so many that they crowd each other, and are as fat as butter. We fed them *hammus,* "pulse," which they almost ate from our

hands, they are so tame. We saw many persons go down to the pond and fill little cans with the water to take home to some sick member of the family probably. We watched a woman tie a strip of cloth torn from the garment of her sick baby to an iron bar in the window of the near-by mosque dedicated to the saint who vowed the fish, in hopes that virtue might pass with a healing touch to that tiny sick bed, and then stooping, possess herself of a handful of earth from under the window to carry home in a handkerchief to place near the sick child or to smear its body with it. She was using what knowledge she had to cure her child, poor thing.

Somehow the sunshine did not seem as bright after she turned away. Her trouble stood between me and its shining. But Miss Delight ran after her and learned where she lived, and promised to send Dr. Saleeby to see her daughter. She will go too, I am sure, before she has her supper, that she may render what service she can to the mother and child. But you should have seen the woman try to kiss Miss Delight's *feet,* she was so grateful. Am I getting missionary inoculation? More and more I am finding what their errand is, and it looms large and important, and not a bit as I used to think.

Entry.

I am not making records these days. We are so overwhelmed with oil and olive shipments, and

oranges just beginning, that when night comes I go to bed instead of sitting up to write for you, dearest.

Christmas Night in Jebail.

I must write while the glamour is still upon everything, of this my first Christmas in the real Christmas land. Kate Morgan begged so hard for me to spend it with her, pleading loneliness, that I came two days ago, in time for all the festivities. She is a wonderful person, Kate is; so like a child at heart, and loving and preserving the old traditions which cluster about this joyous occasion. The children have been keyed up for weeks, impatiently waiting the hanging-up-stocking time, experiencing delicious, anticipatory thrills over the mysterious visit of Santa Claus, all the while busily preparing their gifts for each other with much secrecy and whispered consultations with Kate and their teachers.

And at last the day came. When I arrived I found a very excited household, and it was with difficulty that supper was eaten by the joyous little folk. Along about seven o'clock the great event was ushered in. The children were made ready for bed, when away off dressing-room way we heard singing. Nearer it came, and out went the lights with the entrance of those delightsome children in their nighties, each bearing a lighted candle, stepping softly with slippered feet, and singing that quaint old carol, "I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In." You

should have heard the swing of it, the lilt of it in the line "On Christmas day in the morning."

Around and around they went, singing carol after carol, at last being deflected into their sleeping rooms, but not till each one had paused to hand her stocking to Kate with a courtesy, who pinned it to a line stretched across one corner of the court.

I wish you could have seen those stockings, each one duly labelled with its owner's name, writ large and in English, for Santa is almost two thousand years old and has poor eyesight, of course! Some of the names reached the length of the leg, others were ornamented with flowers and leaves done in colour, and some in both Arabic and English. After the last mite was tucked in her little white bed, we grown-ups got busy, and when in the morning the owners explored that collection of hosiery, not a frown was seen, for every one was joyfully glad at what was found therein.

It was some time near 1 A. M. when Kate and I crept off to bed. But I did not want to sleep. I could not spare the time. I wanted to be lonesome for you, darling mother, for I know you missed me too. I thought of the ten months spent in this far-away land—months of work and experience, and—yes, growth, I think. I say this last reluctantly, for I seem to have been living in an unreal world, and to have been preparing for an indefinable something. I remembered as I lay awake in the darkness the day when I forgot to blow out the match, and was saved

from some dreadful fate by Mr. Whitelaw. And then I wondered about him, why he happened to be in that particular spot in a crowded Syrian bazaar the first time I saw him, and if he had been listening to the "waits" in England, whither he had gone to spend the holidays and to purchase necessary supplies, and if he gave any of us out here a thought. He is a nice sort of person to have around, with a way of making every one comfortable without being the least bit obtrusive.

I had just settled down to sleep when there stole on my ear more carol singing, "Nowel, Nowel, Nowel, Nowel, Born Is the King of Israel," and lo, I was waking and not dropping off to sleep. Those blessed maidens of Kate's were singing before my door, and out on the balconies under the stars, that ever-new old Gospel, "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," that "Christ was born of Mary." Oh, mother, and in *this* land, this very country is the one where "there were shepherds abiding with their sheep." I cannot realize it, that I myself, am the one who is here. I jumped up to follow to the chapel as soon as possible, for those old familiar melodies floated about me like a new Kyrie,—or was I listening to the first one?

Oh, but the joyous part for the little ones was when we were back upstairs, the children seated on the floor exploring their stockings. No words can picture the delight of those motherless little ones over some dolls some one sent Kate, which arrived

in the nick of time. One little six-year-old fastened her eyes on her stocking and the dolly sticking out of the top, speechless at first, then stretching out her arms shaking with eagerness, exclaimed, "Give her to me," her voice quivering with mother love as she clasped the imitation baby to her beating heart. Of course there were sweets and nuts and oranges, and as a very special treat, an apple, imported, for each little tot. And there were pencils and pads and their little gifts to each other, simple and inexpensive, but each little heart was satisfied, and eyes shone and cheeks glowed as one after another called out, "Oh, see,"—"Look,"—"Oh my," this last a real squeal of delight. After the excited voices quieted down a little, Kate said:

"Children, what does this day mean?" One hand waved violently among the others.

"You may answer, Temam."

"It's a give and take day, mother."

"Yes, Temam, but how?"

"We give because God gave us His most blessed Son to-day, and we take because He gives." Kate glanced across the eager faces to me like a proud mother.

"And you, little Zehra?"

"It is the day when Jesus was laid in the manger in Bethlehem."

"And you, littlest one," indicating fascinating Nebeha.

"It's 'I love you' day," running into Kate's outstretched arms.

"So it is, you blessed child," which is a good place to stop in my narrative,—only what do you suppose I found in my stocking? I brought all my packages with me from Trablus. Your precious face! How I love it. The nose is almost kissed off already, so be prepared to send a new one every month. Oh yes, I had another Christmas gift. A book, which was postmarked London and contained a bit of pasteboard with John Denise Whitelaw engraved on one side and "Yuletide greetings" written on the other.

This afternoon Kate took me to see a little new baby, swaddled up like that One down in Bethlehem you used to tell me about. If this one to-day could have talked, this is what she might have said: "It is a queer place I have come to, and most uncomfortable. In the first place no one seemed very glad to see me. They just kept still when some one said I was a girl, whatever that means. I suppose I'll find out if I live long enough. I am all wrapped up in salt—I wonder why they did that?—and have been ever since I got here, the day before yesterday. All but my face, which was sponged off with nice cool water, which felt so good. I heard that woman say, who seemed to be the head of the reception committee the night I came, she was going to give me a bath to-day. I hope she keeps her word. I seem to be sleepy a great deal of the time. But now and

then I need to exercise my lungs, so I cry all I can. Only every time I do that, that woman they call my mother makes me drink some milk, which I like rather well. Sometimes I cry because I have put too much of it in my tummy, and sometimes not enough, or they forgot how long it was since the last time."

Later. "What do you suppose they have done now? Made me a living mummy. My arms and hands are bound to my sides with a long strip of cloth, and I am laid on my back in a cradle and bound fast in that. I can only move my head a little from side to side. When I cry, my mother kneels on the floor and feeds me milk, and sways my cradle back and forth, after I can hold no more, until I drop off to sleep."

Don't you feel sorry for the little mite? Swaddling bands instead of soft, orris-scented flannels and darling white robes. Customs do not change here, and it is probable the Bethlehem Boy was subjected to the same treatment as this one I saw this Christmas day.

Home Again, and Hard at Work.

I have been thinking much of late about how good one must be to be a missionary. The standard is high among these I know. Their ideals are lofty. Their devotion unassailable. All this is apparent. What I want next to get at is their deep-down motive. Not an obedience to any supposedly binding

command, not a mere sentimental reason, but why it is possible for these remarkable people to desire to stay as long as life lasts outside their own country. What *is* the compelling force which leads men and women to exile and hard work? What is back of it all? Surely not fame nor riches—quite the opposite, even I can see.

I was given a glimpse to-day, and yes, perhaps my questioning is answered. I ran over to the school this afternoon for a smell of the roses in that garden of delights and found Miss Delight cradling a sick child in her arms. The little one has been and still is quite ill, and Miss D. has been up several nights with her, but never relaxing her tasks during the day in consequence.

I tried to induce her to let me relieve her for a while, and she go out for a small "smell of the air," as a walk is called.

"No, Rachel, this is my job. Hanny needs just me until she is well, don't you, dear?"

"*Aiweh,* my teacher," reaching up a little hot hand to the dearly beloved face.

"And do you love your job?" I asked softly.

"Why child, my job *is* love, and nothing but love," and I could see her arms strain closer to her breast this little Syrian child, she enwrapped in unstinted affection.

Do you see, mother? I *have* found the mainspring, the dynamic of missions, which I suppose every one but myself knew long ago. I am afraid

I did not want to know very much. "We *love* because He first loved us." I see now, it is love and only love. Do you suppose I shall ever attain to real heights in Christian experience?

I have much to learn, much to unlearn. And where will I land?

Guard faith from doubt, for doubt corrupts faith as salt vitiates honey.—
Arab Proverb.

CHAPTER FOUR

I have never told you about some calls I made with Kate Morgan once, when I was spending a week-end with her, and saw the inside of things where there is little of foreign influence. We went to houses not furnished with French tables and American alarm clocks. There was in one place a sweet-voiced, tender-eyed old woman, who could no longer leave her bed, living with her son and his wife in one room, but which was spotlessly clean.

There was only one thing in that home, the dear old soul we went to see. She was seated on the bed spread on the floor, her face brown from exposure to the sun and her limbs crippled with rheumatism, but her heart was tender and glad. I noticed how affectionately she greeted my companion, who seated herself beside her on the floor, which was covered with a coarse rush mat, and saw how her stiff fingers clutched the skirt of Kate's dress as though fearing she might lose her.

"Fareedeh, do you suffer much?" Kate gently asked.

"Praise be to Allah, I can bear it, I can bear it," was her reverent reply with uplifted eyes.

They chatted awhile, Kate telling her all the news about town, and then opened her pocket Testa-

ment and began to read to her, saying, "Listen now, while I give you a word from the Book." Presently they repeated together the twenty-third Psalm, Fareedeh with hands clasped on her breast. Of course we had to drink a tiny cup of the daughter's delicious coffee without which no caller is ever allowed to depart, and then went to see Um Nimr, followed by *M'a es salaamy,* "go in peace," repeated many times.

Um Nimr (the mother of Leopard) was at her loom weaving a very pretty cotton fabric. Many women have looms in their houses, and turn out some lovely silk material for underwear for their own use.

"Welcome, welcome," she exclaimed. "You have come in an acceptable time," advancing to meet us. "May it please God, you are in good health."

"Thank God, and thou?"

"Humdillah, thank God."

By this time we were seated on cushions on the floor, a surprisingly more comfortable way to sit than on awkward chairs. Then again our hostess began, placing her hand over her heart before touching her forehead with her fingers, *"Keif hal sahtikum?"* "What is the state of your health?" And again the reply, *"Humdillah,* thank God."

After numberless questions about every one in Kate's establishment, my relatives in America and if I was married or going to be and how old I was, we really began to visit. At least Kate did.

"Oh, Um Nimr, what is that book on thy loom?"

"That is my New Testament. I have just finished reading the Gospel of St. John for the first time," said with much pride. "Think of me *ya sitt*" (oh lady), turning to me, Kate helping me out when I could not understand, "learning to read when I am a grandmother. But when I became a Christian, I knew I must be able to read my Bible, and while it is slow work, I am getting on."

Does not that strike you as being something worth while, the helping a woman along in years to learn to read? And does it not show what splendid material Kate has to expend her energies upon? It made a great impression on me, the sight of a Bible before a woman on her loom.

Kate also took me to call on some of her Moslem friends. I had not been in a harem before and was prepared for bolts and winding passages, and screened windows, and a fat eunuch on guard at the entrance. This is what actually happened. But first let me tell you that every house in the land, excepting, of course, in the villages, has a rigidly locked and guarded entrance. If it opens directly on the street, there will be a lock or simple latch which cannot be reached from the outside, but is manipulated by a cord or wire connected with the kitchen, when a would-be guest or member of the family sends a summons to open by means of the resounding knocker. If the house is more pretentious and has ground around it, then you enter

through a portal in a high wall after announcing your presence to the *bowwab* (porter) by two or three taps with the knocker.

In response a voice within cries, *"Meen,"* (who is it?) You reply, *"Ana"* (I), and hurrying footsteps of sandal-shod feet soon bring the porter to fling wide the door in hearty hospitality.

The house we went to that day was surrounded by a luxuriant garden of fruits and flowers, and as we approached it through an avenue, mosaic paved, bordered by orange and pomegranate trees, our hostess awaited us on a veranda overrun with roses and yellow jessamine. She was clad in a flowing robe of blue, which colour seems to be a passion with everybody. I fancy it may be because they have such wonderful blue skies so much of the time. They often say *samawey,* "heaven's colour" when they mean blue. In this case it was very pretty contrasted with the sheer, snow-white veil of our hostess.

We sat for a few minutes in the cosy living room, which, from the piles of bedding I observed at one side I imagine, is transformed into a bedchamber at night. Across one side and end of this rather long room was a divan, (pronounce it deewân) with cushions of rare Damascus silk, protected by spotless white covers bordered with exquisite Irish lace. The floor had a first covering of rush mats on which were laid some priceless prayer rugs, not to be bought at Antine's nor Liberty's.

After a refreshing drink made from the syrup of unripe grapes, and cooled with snow from Lebanon, we adjourned to the more pretentious parlour, or *salah,* reached by a flight of stairs on the outside of the house, and through a court, from which in passing we caught glimpses of a bed-chamber furnished with a lace-bedecked iron bed, and a chair or two of the usual Austrian bent-wood things one sees everywhere.

Several women relatives came in arrayed in their best, with the graceful, gauzy head scarfs, which they draw across the face if by any chance a strange man appears. I noticed a book or two on the table and some newspapers, which our hostess, a bride of a few months, told me she could read. "Tell me," I asked, "do all of these Moslem women read?"

"Many of them," she replied in her pretty, broken English (Kate taught her). "Our family, which is so large as to really be called a tribe, has always held woman in high esteem. We have been taught to read and to know our right hands from our left. All the younger women not only read and write, but some have been sent to boarding schools, and both young and old are beginning to think for themselves."

"How do you feel about the unveiling of women?" I next asked.

"I am not in favor of it, at least not at present. There are Turkish women who are casting it aside, since the granting of the Constitution, but I feel as

most intelligent Moslem women do, that the time is not yet ripe for such radical changes. *Ruyden, ruyden* (slowly, slowly), is how I feel about it." Her English was not as perfect as I have made it appear, but with Kate's help when she did not know a word, I got at what she was trying to express.

"Is it true that polygamy is dying out?" Betty asked.

"Thank God, yes, although in our family it has never been practised within my memory. And we have love matches quite as frequently as our Christian neighbours. Listen while I tell you a tale. There were two children, a boy and girl, who grew up together, though distantly connected, and who declared when quite young they would never be given in marriage excepting to each other. When old enough they were formally betrothed, which with us is as binding as the Christian marriage ceremony.

One day, one of the older women was laughing at the girl about the devotion of Shikry to her. "I believe if you told him to throw himself into the sea for thee he would do it."

"I wonder if he would," was her reply. "I'll see," she cried, and running to him said, "Shikry, dost love me enough to throw thyself into the sea?"

"Ma'aloom" (certainly), he replied.

"Then do it," she commanded.

"I am under thy orders," was the instant rejoinder, and off he started on the run for a high cliff. Such a to-do as there was. Shikry's mother shrieked

and tore her hair, screaming that she had killed her son, and the little bride herself, frightened at what she had done, ran after him, and held him back as he was about to spring from the brink.

"Did you know these people?" I asked, much interested in the pretty story.

"*Ma'aloom.* They were my father and mother," she laughed, and added, "I often say that though Moslems, our marriage is Christian."

As we rose to go I asked, "Won't you tell me where the harem of your house is?"

You should have heard her laugh. "You are in it now. Wherever we Moslem women are, there is the harem." And that explains the absence of locks and eunuchs on guard.

The End of a Busy Day.

The silk season is on and the Worm is King. From one end of this land to the other, all is bustle, hard work, aching backs and toil-stained women's hands. Did you know that the silkworms do not just happen along from somewhere at the proper time in the spring, when the mulberry puts forth her leaves, fresh and green? And also that they do not sit around on the trees and eat their fill and at the right time hang up their cocoons on the branches they have eaten bare? I'll confess I had never given a thought to the *how* of silk production, and I find the price we pay for the most beautiful of all fabrics is not commensurate with the labour necessary

before it can be sent to the loom, not to mention the luring display in the shops of the world.

First there are the *bizr* "seeds," the people call them,—the eggs which come from Sardinia, if you want to get the best, and are sold by weight in round, perforated boxes. When the mulberry leaves are large enough in March, these boxes are taken to a place which is kept at the proper temperature until the eggs are hatched, after which the millions of tiny, sluggish worms are placed on large wicker trays, or crude clay ones manufactured at home, and arranged on shelves put up in the houses or temporary shelters among the trees.

Then the incessant work begins. The leaves are picked by the women and fed to the worms, and so fastidious are their majesties when young, they will not eat unless the leaves are carefully arranged and of a certain growth,—not too young.

But gradually as the sightless things—did you know they are without eyes?—get larger, they are content to eat them any old way and in almost limitless quantities. Four times during their short lives they fast for a space of twenty-four hours, with heads upreared and motionless, and then the poor women have time to wash their clothes and tidy up the house. But towards the last, just before the worms are ready to spin their cocoons, the work is incessant day and night to keep a fresh supply of leaves on the trays. The men have to turn to and help now, for every limb must be cut from the trees

and every leaf stripped off, and all decayed spots on the stubby stumps chopped out. Then the bark must be peeled from the limbs, which are really only shoots with which the tree rehabilitates itself immediately to produce a new crop of leaves. Every year amputation, every season two crops of leaves, one for the worms, one for the cattle in a land where summers are dry and hay is unknown. The tender bark to be fed to the cattle, too, is carefully saved, as are the long, slender shoots as fuel for the pot or *sajh* on which the delicious paper-thin bread is baked.

It is a novel sight, the myriads of cocoons, some pure white, some yellow, fastened to bits of dried herbage which had been set conveniently near for the outreachings of the worm, seeking something to fasten to as it enshrouds itself in its silken tomb.

It is a gala time when the cocoons are picked, the neighbours helping each other, and the *simsar,* "buyer," comes along. How excited the people get over the price, which is made as low as possible, of course, by the clever buyer. Then for weeks following there is a steady flow of cocoons in great sacks to factories. The tinkle of the mule-bells on the carriage roads and bridlepaths fills the air, for the moths will eat their way out to the destruction of the silken threads if they are not steamed very soon in a *mukhnukh* (that word is interesting, meaning a choking place), then follows the drying in the open air, a long process.

C. D. is away most of the time now, going from factory to factory. He is a hard worker, David is. No sooner is the cocoon season over, than the factories start up and we ship many precious bales of raw silk each week to France. In the autumn the olives claim our attention, and that means shipments of oil and olives in addition, and soap all the year. The orange market begins in the late autumn, and then we *do* have to work. We load a steamer each week with oranges alone.

This was steamer day and I am tired. I would have been more so had not Mr. Whitelaw, who seems to be much in evidence these days, come in and begged for a ride about sunset, after office hours. I have decided to buy the horse I wrote you about in my last letter. Such a beauty; pure white, wavy, flowing tail and as fleet as the wind, but as gentle as yourself, mother dear. I'll tell you what happened to-day, if you won't scold. We were cantering along down on the sands, when in a spirit of fun, I suddenly turned about, but did not calculate my distance well, for I kept right on, straight on, through the air over Nejmy's head. And then what do you suppose happened? The horse was upon me, but being an Arabian, she will not step on human flesh if it can be avoided. So she reared on her hind feet and side-stepped around me, and never grazed even my habit.

Of course, Mr. Whitelaw was beside me immediately, and when he found I was not hurt he got

cross, and really almost scolded me for being reckless.

"Miss Locke, why did you do that?" and his tone was clearly annoyed.

"Do what?" I meekly enquired, as I arranged my disordered hair.

"Try to do the impossible, turn your horse when cantering as fast as we were. You might have been killed. I wonder if you are not hurt somewhere?" His tone was more anxious than vexed now, as he assisted me to mount again. "Are you sure you are quite all right?"

"Yes, indeed. I am not hurt a bit," I declared. And then I did have the grace to say, "I am sorry if you are annoyed, but truly I am not hurt, and I am quite used to horses, for I always rode in Central Park at home."

"Do you think Central Park riding is like the wild, free swing of these Arabians, which go like the wind?" and his tone was not exactly conciliatory.

I expect I will be lame for a day or two, but never mind, I won't try the experiment again, for I did feel rather uncertain as to the outcome of the rapidly approaching thud when I found myself flying through space. And I promised Mr. Whitelaw to resist all such impulses in the future, he seemed so troubled about it. And *he* promised he would not tell on me to C. D.

Another Day. No Entry of Events. Only a Question.

If I have found it hard to have sympathy with the missionaries who are here just to live, to love and show what He did with His life, how is it I am here, doing my serious work over books and invoices and letters that this cousin of mine may make money? Conceded. Money, too, may be made in America.

Off on a Tour.

Miss Delight is not only the head and brains of the girls' school, but she sends out her lines of help into many of the towns and villages which she visits during her vacation. One would think she would be tired enough after continuous work in a large boarding school during a long school year, to want to rest and relax when summer comes. But she only takes a short time to get her clothes in order, and then she is up and away for a month or six weeks' tour. And, as if that were not sufficient, if any slightest need arises she spends the fortnight of the Easter recess with "her people." This spring some one "up Hamath way" was in sorrow and she felt constrained to go to this sad heart, and because the new crop of cocoons is not yet in, she took me with her by special, gracious permission. So I am off on a missionary tour!

We left Trablus early one morning by the train which crawls around the base of old Turbul, the

guardian of Belad Akkar, which territory still retains its traditions of the Crusaders and of Peter the Hermit, enduring the test of passing through fire, near the village of Minyara. Somehow I had expected that the farther east we went just so much more would life grow primitive. But instead, I found it more abundant, and was amazed when we arrived at Homs to find, not a village, but a city, compactly built and with some 80,000 inhabitants, situated on the Orontes River, full of life and bustle, with through trains on the main line from Beyrout and Damascus to Aleppo, carrying the Western throb and impulse to the interior.

There was once an imposing castle dominating the town from an artificial mound, and I wandered amid its ruins and looked off into the haze over the desert, which stops not far from the Homs front doors, and pictured heroic Zenobia marshalling her forces, only to be humbled by the Romans and chained in golden fetters, forced to grace the triumphal return of Aurelian to Rome. As we stood there, fronting the widest horizon I think I ever saw, I spied what looked like white beehives, a great cluster of them, away to the north, and was told it was a village whose houses were built in a curious circular fashion. When we passed through it a few days later, it seemed as though the architecture of the North American Indians had been borrowed and their wigwams reproduced in sun-dried, white-washed bricks.

I know now, mother, what "the many mansions" mean, for I have seen some. Imagine a high surrounding wall with but one street door, opening into a paved court in which there are fruit trees—apricot, orange and pomegranate in full bloom, with double white jessamine, heavy scented, clambering up the side of the house. On the right hand as we entered was the "father's house," a large room with divans on two sides, on which there were covers and cushions of rich silk, while the floor was overlaid with thick, beautiful rugs. Here we sat a while and partook of sherbat and sweets, and then were permitted to see the sons' "mansions," similar rooms ranged around the great central court, the eldest son's being directly opposite the father's. And to make it seem as though we were living for a while right in the Bible, this father was "preparing a place" for the youngest son, who was expected in the near future to bring home his bride. Yes, these were the "many mansions," within the Father's house, and how homey it makes heaven seem, now that I have seen this.

In direct contrast to this beautiful picture, was hearing about the celebration of the feast of Bairam by the Moslems, a feast in commemoration of the offering up of Ishmael, not Isaac. They have what is called the *da'asy*, "the stepping," when men literally pave the street with their bodies, face downward, while the sheikh rides over them on his Arabian steed. I was invited to witness it, but declined!

They claim no one is ever injured, but what a dreadful manifestation of religious fervour!

The missionaries have been very successful in Homs. There are two churches, a number of day schools and a large boys' boarding school, all supported by the church members. By that I mean, if they do not themselves give all the money necessary, they see that it is raised. They were early taught that God's tenth must be religiously kept for His work, hence for all ordinary drafts upon the treasury, they have an abundance. On Sunday the men go out two and two to neighbouring villages, preaching and teaching the Gospel and are achieving marvellous results.

We stayed in Homs several days and then took a carriage for Hamath, as we wished to stop at some villages en route. Resten, the beehive town was one. It is situated near the Orontes, and we ate our lunch near where it bends in among the trees. Some women, clad in their flowing blue garments with long black veils, left their work—woman's work—that of moulding manure into flat cakes which the sun bakes, for their fuel—they have no other—to gaze at the foreign women. I was wearing black, of course, for dear father, and they looked me over in silent, unbounded curiosity. Finally one ventured the remark, "Hast thou any hair?" I assured her I had an abundance, and removed my hat to make good my words.

They all giggled like school girls at the sight of

my locks pinned to my crown. Then presently another found her voice and pointing to my companion, timidly remarked, "That *sitt* is all ashes colour, hat, dress, even her hands, and thou art all black. Why?" Miss Delight explained that she was dressed that way because she liked the colour, and that I was in mourning. The word she used for mourning was not familiar and they did not understand. So she said that a friend of mine had died. They looked at me with the quick sympathy one meets with everywhere out here, and one remarked, "Oh, my little sister, thou art sorrowful. Did all thy friends die that thou wearest only *aswed?*" Was not that a rebuke? Do you know what she would have done, had her very dearest died? She would have bound her head in a pure white veil, while we Christians who have a lively hope in the blessed resurrection and reunion, swathe ourselves in black of deepest dye.

The Old City of Hamath.

Such queer experiences as I am having. I am sure I'll be black and blue pinching myself to see if it is really I, myself, going about in this old city, so old that it long ago forgot to count the centuries of its existence.

How would you have enjoyed seeing me enveloped in the *ezar,* the covering garment all women wear in the street, my face hidden behind a hideous bright-coloured veil, even my hands covered by a

fold of the *ezar*. I revelled in it, because I wended my way in and out of the bazaars along with Miss Delight, and not a soul knew I was not a "daughter of the Arabs." Of course we left off our hats, for there is a sort of cape part which is drawn up over the head. When we got back this afternoon from paying that call of condolence we had come so far to make, poor Miss Delight's hat was nowhere to be found. It had been stolen. Some inquisitive boys had climbed the wall and got into her room over the iron bars in the window, and were so taken with its beauty (she got it in America some four years ago), that they decamped with it. She recovered it later, none the worse for having been exhibited all about the neighbourhood as the head covering of the foreign woman.

This city—it is as large as Homs—is "watered" from the Orontes by means of huge water wheels with primitive bucket attachments, which lift the water to conduits, whence it is distributed in all directions. But the process of elevation is apparently not only painful to the wheels, but appallingly so to the ears of him who must perforce listen to their protests by day and night. It beggars description, the perpetual groaning, scolding, screaming, slow-moving wheels, as though protesting that it is time their age-long services were discontinued and modern methods adopted. They dominate the town as the tall buildings do in New York. They scream at you to look at them, something to be

seen nowhere else on earth. One wonders who invented them, and why some one has not had the inspiration to grease them.

I would have been glad to stay here longer, but Miss Delight's time is limited, and to-morrow we go on to our last place before turning our faces homeward, but I managed to see some Hittite writing on a wall and several rock-cut tombs. Perhaps Mr. Whitelaw will yet find that bilingual inscription he is seeking and then all the queer Hittite seals and letters will be deciphered—perhaps. Did I tell you that this same gentleman came as far as Homs with us? He was returning to his excavations, and went right on the next day.

My Next Day.

I was as proud as Punch of our picturesque cavalcade when we started for Mahardee this morning, where is a wonderful group of Christians and a more wonderful preacher,—a man who obtained his first Bible by exchanging his sword for it. The Hamath pastor, Qussees Yaqub, regal in *kefeyeh* and *abeyeh,* "head shawl and dust robe," rode his superb black mare, which has a pedigree half a yard long, literally. Miss Delight and I were on beautiful Bagdad donkeys, and the cook, who always goes along on tours, brought up the rear with the commissariat.

As we rode along, away off to the left was the great Hamath plain covered with tall grain, which

as yet shows no suspicion of the coming harvest,—a sea of gently undulating green billows, the farther shore of which was the range of Nuseireh Mountains. Indeed, the people here, many of whom have never been from home, call this plain with its unbroken expanse of wheat fields, *el Bahr,* likening it in their imagination to the sea, they have heard of but never seen.

Mahardee, our objective, a large village, is unique. It is surrounded by dunghills, which have assumed proportions, as stable products are carefully hoarded for fuel. You never get away from the odour, nor the fleas and mosquitoes which breed therein. Before reaching the village, we passed the holdings of the people, community land, which is divided each year or two. "The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places," means that the "measuring line" was kind to the Psalmist in the dividing by lot of the common land among the villagers. And from the blackness of the soil we saw the men working, I should think everybody in Mahardee had a "goodly heritage."

A second unique thing is that the horses are kept underground, in real, truly cellars. The town is on the edge of the desert, and marauding bands of roving Arabs have a liking for horse-flesh. So the clever people dig under their dooryards and hide their stables, and so sleep peacefully o' nights. It was something to see the horses which had been worked all day in the fields, soberly trot down the stairs

to their supper of barley (no oats are raised out here), and after a while come racing up again for a drink of water before being locked in for the night. And the water—always a question of great moment in this dry and thirsty land, is brought from the beneficent Orontes River a good half-hour's walk, in great copper jars on the heads of the women, which accounts for their erect carriage and stately steppings.

We ate our supper seated on the floor on which our hostess had spread a beautiful blue and white sheet of silk and cotton, Hamath weave, and never did fried eggs taste so good. Perhaps it was owing to the flat bread baked in an oven heated with manure fuel! On it Sitt Sara poured thick cream. We topped off with olives and a cup of Arab coffee. Supper over, the church members gathered for the service Qussees Yaqub had come to conduct. And they kept coming, men and women, some bringing children to be baptised, until there were more than two hundred reverent, devout worshippers seated close together on the floor. There was a little table, not overly strong nor well made, which served as pulpit and reading desk and altar, with room for a lamp, which was neither large nor very bright. But the Bible was there and apostolic fervour, such as we look with disfavour upon in our old Western land. There was soberness, earnestness and more real religiousness, the this-one-thing-I-do-kind, than

I have ever seen before. What matter if they did start the second verse of a hymn to a different tune than the one they started out with, and had to be reminded by the Qussees that the first was the right one ere they essayed the third verse. Their hearts made melody, I know, and more acceptable to God than that of our choirs of paid singers. How their faces shone as they sang.

But when the Sacrament of the Holy Communion was celebrated I felt I had never before known what it meant. The flat bread, "this is my body broken for you," joyfully received with hands which shook with emotion, and the poured out wine from hand to hand passing in memory of Him they devotedly loved.

This journey has been very much worth while for me. I have learned what religion should be—a matter of heart-consciousness, the pace setter for the daily walk and conduct because of *knowing* the indwelling Christ. Mother, I have learned to sing, "Jesus, lover of my soul"; I never knew how before. Those people here to-night taught me when they lost the tune and found it again.

Very few of the elder women can read and not all of the men. But there is a dignity and a zest of living which at first puzzled me, until I discovered that, according to their ideas, a person's "life consisteth not in the things he possesseth," but in how he measures up to a certain standard set by a Man

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brought up in this very land, down in Galilee, in a city called Nazareth. I am feeling my way, oh mother of me, with very stumbling steps, to higher ground. Mayhap some day I'll too measure up.

Load not upon to-day the burdens of the years, for each day shall bring thee its portion.—Arab Proverb.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Second Summer. The Month of July.

The four volumes which have gone to you had more or less of Mr. Whitelaw in them, and here I am beginning the fifth one with his name. It is something I cannot help, as he and C. D. have struck up a real David and Jonathan brotherhood, and it is the regular thing now when Jonathan comes to town to stop with us. Some supplies for his diggings are expected, and as the steamers are sometimes irregular he came on several days before the time, to watch, I suppose, for the smoke of the ship bringing them over the Enfeh Point, a consignment of tinned things to eat, along with picks and shovels and wheelbarrows. And while waiting, time seems to hang heavily on his hands, for after a period of longer or shorter duration, he is apt to turn up at the office and wait for closing time.

Yesterday, above the clatter of the typewriter, I heard him in C. D.'s room, talking, I supposed, of pre-historics, and when I went in with some letters to be signed, C. D. was saying, "I can't get away, Whitelaw. Nussar is coming about new machinery in the Tell factory. I'm sorry. Here is Rachel, she will go with you."

"Yes indeed, I'll go anywhere with anybody this wonderful day," I laughed.

"You don't know what all this means," Mr. Whitelaw said, smiling. "I want to go to Jebail and see the site of that pre-historic village I have heard about. Hackett says he cannot go, but will send you as his substitute," and he looked questioningly into my eyes as though not quite sure of my answer.

"And I am a joyful, willing substitute," I exclaimed, to his evident pleasure. "And besides, Kate lives there. When do we start?"

"You had better go at once if you are to get back to-night," C. D. said. Now, mother, don't shake your dear head and think I am always shirking. But the prospect of a run in the car together with a glimpse of Kate was too alluring, and besides, was I not sent of C. D.? I rushed out, caught that beastly tram which is usually so exasperatingly slow, and burst in on Betty, who, while I dressed for the ride, put up some lunch, and away we went, Mr. Whitelaw acting as chauffeur. Oh, the joy of it, going in and out among the gnarled, twisted olives in the Kura, with the background of the towering mountains, majestic, grim and silent, as though saying, "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength."

"Don't you feel so?" I suddenly asked.

"I suppose I do if you do," my companion replied, and I surprised that reluctant smile in his eyes as he glanced at me. "But what about?"

I was a bit confused, for he had caught me at that trick I have of thinking out loud. "I was thinking of the strength of those everlasting mountains, and how they speak peace to us mortals in our restlessness."

"'Round our restlessness His rest?' Yes, the mountains do that I think, as does the flow of a river and the wideness of the sea."

We rounded the corner and sped up the splendid road along the Mesailaha headland. After we had dashed through the first tunnel, the car slowed down and stopped beside an opening in the parapet which keeps us from dropping off the edge into the water below.

"What is the matter?" I inquired as Mr. Whitelaw jumped out and disappeared through the opening.

"In a moment," he called back, and realizing he was a grown man, and not a child like Caryl, I settled back in my seat and waited, feasting my eyes on the ravishing view of old Turbul to the north and the limitless sea to the west. I suddenly realized oh, mother, that I loved those mountains and rocks and the 'great and wide sea,' mysterious because of its wideness and lovable because of its moods. The wonder is that I do not become more interested in the human product, whose rugged lives are moulded and shaped by all this bigness and wideness.

Betty has grown very fond of them, and I discovered the other day that the 'engagement' she has

every Friday afternoon, is to teach singing in Miss Delight's school. I asked her why she did that, and she said, "Rachel, I seemed so useless beside those splendid women missionaries, and one day I went to the school to ask Miss Delight something and found her trying to teach the girls singing, when she had had no training in music, and I with my musical education thrown away, so to speak, I begged her to let me tell the girls how to sing that particular song. When I found how much it relieved her, I kept right on."

I remembered all this as I sat in the car awaiting the reappearance of Mr. Whitelaw. He came back in due time, flushed and panting.

"It is as I thought. There is a path which leads down to a spring of cold water. Do you feel inclined to essay the feat of scrambling down there and have lunch? The climb up is stiff, and not easy."

"By all means, if——" and I hesitated, ashamed to confess it, "if there are no snakes. Are there?"

"I did not see any," he replied, and did not even smile at my childish inquiry. "I am deadly afraid of snakes, and I am told there are very poisonous ones in this land. Thank you for not laughing at me," I added.

"I am ready," displaying a stout stick he carried, and led the way down a narrow, uncertain path, steadying me over the steep places of which there were so many, that he held my hand most of the

way. And I liked it! He has nice, cool, dry hands, not the clammy and sticky kind to which one adheres.

In a cleft of the towering rock was a bit of fairy-land. The water did not bubble up from below, but trickled down from above, and nourished into being myriads of feathery ferns which clung to the sides of the chasm, beaded and glistening with the moisture constantly and lavishly showered upon them.

We turned our backs to the sea, and revelled in the greenness and coolness, and ate Betty's sandwiches and olives with hot tea from the thermos bottles in great content. Mr. Whitelaw was in a silent mood, and I have learned this much about a man through working with C. D., to *respect the mood,* unless I wish to bring something not exactly —er—welcome in the way of a polite rebuff or a downright snub. When there was not even a crumb left for the ants to carry off, I arose, "And what is the conclusion of the whole matter, to quote a wise man who once lived in this land?" I laughingly asked, while I stowed away plates and things in the basket.

My companion had been fingering a frail maiden-hair fern, quite to its death, I observed, when he turned with that smile hidden in back of his eyes, and coming towards me said, "That—that I love you," with the same ease he might have said, 'Good morning.'

"Good gracious," I ejaculated, nearly dropping a

thermos bottle. "What makes you do that?" stepping back out of reach of a stretched-out hand. "I wouldn't if I were you."

"Yes? And why not?"

"Why—because—why I don't know," I answered slowly, "unless because I don't have a particle of that emotion for you."

"Really?" and I was surprised to see his lips tremble a little. "I have been so busy loving you since that episode with the match, that you have seemed —to belong to me. Why couldn't you care for me, my—Miss Locke?"

"I do that," I frankly averred. "But I don't—it never occurred to me to—do that other."

"Now that it has been suggested to you," and that smile crept into his eyes again, "does it seem so impossible?" Then after a silence, "Rachel—you will let me call you that here alone with only the sea and the rocks to hear? Will you set yourself the task of learning the primer of love? I'll be your teacher, if you'll let me," he pleaded.

"Mr. Whitelaw," I began, but the words would not come. Something seemed to stir in my heart, a new emotion and unfamiliar, but I stood silent, afraid somehow to look at him. The sails of the fishing boats stood taut against the wind. I counted them reflected in the blue water,—one, two, three, four,—one, two, three, four,—tongue-tied, while he waited for permission to teach me to—to love him.

"Mr. Whitelaw——" at last finding my voice and

summoning my fugitive eyes from those glittering patches of cloth at sea, "please do not think I am indifferent or sceptical as to—what you have done me the honour to say. But really, while I have liked you, that is I do not dislike it when you come to my cousin's house,—I do not know that I wish to employ a teacher in—the subject you mentioned, at least not in the immediate future," I hastily concluded. "And now, shall we start for Jebail?" and I sped up that path I had found so hard a short time ago, like a thing with winged feet, until, oh, until I saw not a yard away right where I would have to step, a grey, mottled snake, waiting, waiting!

I am sure C. D. in his office heard the shriek I sent up. Certainly Mr. Whitelaw did, for with a leap or two of his long legs he overtook me, and thrusting me aside, exclaimed, "Don't be frightened," and I closed my eyes and knew his stick was being wielded with force, for I heard the blows, and then, that disgusting blackness began to shroud me which always follows a fright. I did not faint, but I clung—clutched Mr. Whitelaw's hand, which happened to be within reach somehow, until we were in that car where he found C. D.'s emergency flask and came to me with a thimbleful. "Rachel, won't you try and swallow this? That is it. You are all right now, are you not?" His hand had gathered both my cold, trembling ones into his. "Dearest, forgive me. I did not realize how selfish I have been," and his face was drawn and anxious.

I tried to smile and give him the assurance that there was nothing to forgive, but my nerves played me false and off I went into miserable, drivelling tears. And I am sure the poor man wished he had never seen a woman. He made no comment, simply waited silently a moment, then plunged into the car beside me, and off we shot up the road, with no more attention bestowed on a foolish, silly girl like me. And it was not long before I found the rush of air acting as a medicine for my ruffled spirits.

Not a word did we speak as the car rolled along eating up the miles until we were going down the bumpy road to Kate Morgan's house. Just as we slowed down before the picket fence, Mr. Whitelaw turned to me and said quizzically, "And are we to be friends, Miss Locke?" holding out his hand, smiling frankly, his old familiar self.

"Oh, if we may," I said, yielding my hand to him, which he held closely between both of his until Kate came running out, his eyes never leaving my face.

"Rachel, this is so good of you. Why, I know Mr. Whitelaw," as in my confusion I began a formal presentation. Then addressing him, "I have such a lot of new specimens to show you, and very different to any we have seen."

"I am eager to see them," he replied as he ran the car inside the big gate and Kate and I went upstairs.

"Rachel, somehow you look tired. But Trablus

is a long way from here, is it not?" she inquired affectionately.

"Ah, yes," I sighed, "a very long way."

The Next Day. One A. M.

Sleep will not come to-night (small wonder), and I have lighted my candle and rummaged in the desk for paper and pencil that I may go on with my tale. Kate would not listen to my returning with Mr. Whitelaw, and here I am in her pretty guest chamber, trying to forget the look he gave me when I announced I was going to spend Sunday here. There was pain in it—I think—and, now Rachel Locke, you and I will have it out.

I wonder if Mr. Whitelaw is asleep. He and Kate seem great friends, and I really felt almost *de trop*, when they became so absorbed over pre-historics and things. Why did he not fall in love with her instead of me, I wonder. She is much more brainy and attractive, and besides has bigger piles of money.

Mother dear, did you feel as I do when father proposed to you? And did you say "yes" and learn to love him afterward? I wish I could talk with you to-night. I know you would like *him*. He is manly and kind and very wise and learned. He would make you a good son, too, and take tender care of the woman he marries, which won't be me! He has nice hands, and I like his voice and the beautiful English he uses, and when he

smiles, *my* smile, away in back in his eyes, he is adorable. Only, I don't want to marry him—not now, anyway. And yet I like him, and if he had—had wooed me before he spoke, as I have dreamed the man I am to marry would do, I might have listened, just a little. The gift of a man's love is not a small thing, and for an instant, when he bade me good-bye in leaving, I felt queer! Kate was down in the garden gathering roses to send to Betty when he said two or three words which I'd write just to keep them always, if you were not to see them. I'll write them anyway, because you are my precious mother, and you can skip them if you want to. Coming close to me he said in a low, grave tone, his hands holding mine closely, his eyes full of unspeakable things, "Take it or leave it, Rachel, but the love of my life is yours,—to-day, and to-morrow, and always," and saying this he brought his lips to my hands for a long second, or two perhaps, and then turned and ran down the stairs. Oh, dear! I did not come out here to fall in love, nor have a man love me like that. *His kisses burned.*

Sunday Night.

I did not waken early, or rather it was quite daylight before I dropped off to sleep, but when I did open my eyes, the children were singing grace, their childish voices ringing true and sweet as they stood around the breakfast table:

"God is great and God is good,
And we thank Him for this food;
By His hand must all be fed,
Give us, Lord, our daily Bread."

You should see how quaint and attractive they look in their caps, kerchiefs and aprons, the every-day uniform. On Sunday they are in white wash dresses, with flowing white veils. On each little left arm is an old-fashioned black silk bag with a draw-string, in which like our grandmothers, is carried a pocket-handkerchief, and if going to church, a small prayer-book and hymnal, for Kate is an Episcopalian, you remember.

When they filed into the chapel this morning singing, "Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart," in English, I quite forgot I was in a foreign land.

Kate has a wonderful work here. Her ideas are very practical and wholesome. I really believe she feels that these orphans are her own flesh and blood, for there is not a bit of the institutional atmosphere about the place, although the discipline is strict. Every one remarks the evidences of constructive work, of character building. She has no use for idleness any more than she believes that mentality is the sum and substance of life. The industrial part has attained a high degree of excellence. She aims to develop the native industries rather than introduce new ones from the West. These children make the most exquisite Turkish rugs. Kate learned

how to weave them herself, sitting on the floor, like the Syrians, so that she no longer needs an expert to tell her if things are going right, although she has several instructors for the children. Crocheting is another big factor. She imports her thread from Ireland, and employs women and girls in their homes to make Irish lace. Never, even in Ireland, have I seen more perfect work. They also make those wonderful blouses of nothing but Irish lace. You should see the little folks' gardens, too, and what is better, eat the vegetables and fruits thereof.

I must tell you about the beautiful evening worship Kate conducts. After supper somewhere near seven o'clock, Kate sits down at the piano and strikes a chord or two, giving a leading strain of a familiar hymn, which after a second, off in the distance, sweet voices will be heard singing. To-night it was, "I Think When I Read that Sweet Story of Old," coming nearer and nearer, as the white-robed maidens slowly paced a beautifully directed march, weaving geometrical figures as they approached their places on one side of the large court. Kate then began to recite softly, the one hundred and fourth Psalm, which those children carried through to the end without a mistake. Then more hymns in English and Arabic, followed by a recitation of that wonderful statement of Christian doctrine, the Westminster catechism, which Kate uses because its grandeur belongs, she says, to the majesty of the land wherein Christianity was cradled, and because it suits the

people better than the one of her own church. Now, isn't that being broad-minded?

But the most touching part of this service was when they knelt in prayer and all recited, "Our Father," ending with, "Now I lay me."

As soon as they got up from their knees, each one came up to Kate and threw her arms around her neck for a good-night kiss and hug. That over, they stopped short in leaving their beloved "mother" as they call her, and dropped an old-fashioned courtesy before scampering away to bed.

It has been a queer day—at least my emotions have not been normal. I heard the wonderful singing, but underneath, like the throb of a great organ, there raced through my brain, "the love of my life is yours, to-day and to-morrow and always," and—

A Week Later.

How shall I begin to transcribe the history of the past week? I seem to have lived years since I wrote that "and" at the close of my last entry in this book. Kate, so capable and strong, has been snatched away from this work, which needs her so much, and to-night lies in that little graveyard in Beyrout near the church, where all the American dead are.

She was not well when I came that day with Mr. Whitelaw. "Only a cold," she insisted, but which seemed to tighten its hold upon her all day Sunday, and while I was writing after going to my room for the night, I heard her call. Running in, I found her

in great distress. "In front," she gasped, pointing to her chest.

We got a doctor, who from the moment he saw her considered her condition grave. It was pneumonia, with the heart going all wrong. The morning found her no better, worse rather, and in response to a telegram to C. D. for which I paid three times the usual charge that it be delivered immediately, within three hours he and Betty were here and Dr. Saleeby with them. How thankful I was when I saw the car coming down the road.

Kate greeted Dr. Saleeby with, "I know I am very ill. Is there time? Oh, my work, my children," said, in agonized whispers, for every breath was torture. Oh mother, I cannot tell it in detail for my tears, only the facts, bare and cold. We summoned the Consul from Beyrout—another thrice paid telegram followed by C. D.'s car at top speed, and all the while Kate kept saying, "Please, Rachel, my work, my work, you will? Promise me," repeated over and over again.

It seems Kate had made a will which the Consul held and brought with him. In this will she had left her entire fortune to finance the work she had begun and made such a success. We did not know the situation, nor her resources, still less what to do. But she did, sick as she was and dying, she knew.

When the Consul came in she whispered, "alone," and I left them together. Presently David and Betty were called in to witness her signature on a

piece of paper. At sunset her life suddenly went out, and all night long the weeping, mourning people of the town came and went in silent, loving sympathy. At nine o'clock the next morning we shrouded her in her coffin and followed by those heart-broken children she had mothered, carried her to the chapel where the funeral was held. All the shops were closed and the entire town, it seemed, came to do her honour. My heart nearly broke as they wrapped the blessed Stars and Stripes about the coffin. She was so young and so far from the home land.

The funeral over we started for Beyrout and the American Cemetery, the casket still covered with the flag. At the Beyrout River bridge, we were met by a good many carriages containing Americans and Syrians who knew and loved her, and when we reached the beautiful American church, it was almost full, where a second service in English was held.

Ah, me, how sad it was when, to the strains of "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth," two young American men from the College, with Cousin David and Mr. Whitelaw, lifted Kate's coffin to their shoulders for the last stage in her earthly journey, the cypress-bordered path leading to her resting-place. At the grave, which somebody's loving hand had lined with pink roses, the enfolding flag was removed, and just before the coffin began to sink, the Consul stepped forward and spread a small

American flag right over her stilled heart. And I knew she would not feel so lonely in her Turkish grave, because her covering was the symbol of her home land she so passionately loved.

I have not told you of the blessed white-haired missionary saint who conducted the service with such large sympathy and tenderness, nor of the wonderful choir which one of the professors in the College conducts with much skill. They sang, "Beneath the Cross of Jesus," her favourite hymn, and beside her open grave these verses of Rutherford's:

"With mercy and with judgment
My web of life He wove,
And aye the dews of sorrows
Were lustred by His love.
I'll bless the hand that guided,
I'll bless the heart that planned,
When throned where glory reigneth
In Immanuel's land.

"The bride eyes not her garments,
But her dear bridegroom's face.
I will not gaze on glory,
But on my King of grace;
Not on the crown He giveth,
But on His pierced hand.
The Lamb is all the glory
Of Immanuel's land."

* * * * *

It is another day. I could not write more. And now all I can find to say is, who am I to be asked to do this thing? Unfitted, unwilling, unready. That is how I feel, and I know you will think I have summed up the situation accurately. The paper Kate signed just before she died contained these few words: "I give absolutely and without reserve to my beloved friend and college mate, Rachel Locke, such moneys as may be on deposit in the Imperial Ottoman Bank in Beyrout, and the Chemical Bank in New York, that she may draw upon them at once, and I beg her in the name of our friendship, to care for my orphaned children in person, or make such provision for their future as she in consultation with David Hackett, her cousin, and John Denise Whitelaw, my friend, together with Robert Fellowes Mardin, American Consul General in Beyrout, may deem wise and expedient.

"I lay upon her this sacred trust, together with the administration of my estate, giving her one-half of the same outright, the rest she will hold in trust for the work here in Jebail, Syria. This is my last will and testament." I can see now the Consul's office in which we sat while the will was read. The stiff, upholstered furniture, the Damascus draperies and inlaid tables, the soft-footed Kawass bringing coffee, while through the open casement, away to the north stretched the coast line ending in the Masailaha Point. I was acutely sensible of my surroundings, as I listened to words which may completely change

the conduct of my life and set my feet in strange, untried paths.

What do I know about orphans and their upbringing, who never even had a sister? The money was well spent in the long cable to you explaining the situation, and your answer has just come, that you are sailing soon. I will hold on until you get here. You will know what I ought to do.

Mr. Whitelaw seemed reluctant to have me assume the responsibility of this large work, while acknowledging the present necessity as well as the opportunity. I imagine he thought, and rightly, that I was not sufficient thereunto. Of course, some one had to be here *ad interim,* and C. D., who has that high sense of honour and sacredness of a trust all the Hacketts have, said at once that my place was here until we could arrive at some satisfactory solution of the matter. When you are once here, we will decide everything. Meanwhile, I am alone, the only foreign woman in town, and counting off the days until you come.

We have no idea of the amount of Kate's estate, but the Consul thinks it is somewhere in six figures. It appears if she had not made her wishes known in this formal manner by appointing me to take charge, the Consul would have been obliged to take possession of everything, and seal it up until her will had been probated.

One Day.

I get up early every morning and am out on my rounds by 6:30, following Kate's custom, although the head assistant is quite capable of taking charge of all house details. I never saw such shining lamps,—kerosene, of course, and Russian oil at that. Remember that the girls are not large, but under her direction they do amazingly good work. She sees that the sleeping rooms and all details of sweeping and dustings are carried out with great thoroughness. She has a passion for neatness and order. Her name in Arabic means "dear," so I named her straight Miss Dear, which I think she likes.

My Second Month.

I did not know that humans could be so wonderfully good. I never dreamed that such helpful kindness—*constructive kindness*—existed, as I have experienced since I was picked up bodily and *made* to be a missionary. Here is a sample which came to-day:

Dear, brave Rachel:

You did not elect to enrol under our banner of loving service, you poor child, and I would that I were free to go to you and help you set your household in order. And yet, I am not sure that it is not better for you to work out your own problems. But you'll get stuck—often—and when you cannot see any way out, and need

the advice of some one who has been through the business of learning a little to demonstrate to this people, "how He lived, how He loved and what He did among men," write out your difficulties and mail them to me, and if I can I'll help.

Only, dear, the One who is wiser than I and who, I believe, lives right with you, He is a very *present* help. Do you know the little verse?

"Speak to Him thou, for He hears,
And spirit with spirit may meet,
Closer is He than breathing,
And nearer than hands and feet."

Affectionately your friend,
"Miss Delight."

I have found one sure task laid out for me, the study of Arabic. The little I had picked up in Trablus has been of immeasurable service to me, but it is too meagre.

Hence I have started to study in earnest. Whether I am to remain here the rest of my days, I do not know, but this I see clearly, my present duty is to be able to speak the language of the people I live among now. Fortunately I speak French, which has been a great help, for that is a second language in this part of Syria. Every educated person speaks it well. I received a second letter to-day which I want you to see.

Dear,

You know that to-morrow has not come yet, so do not try to fit its perplexities in with to-day's. Heed what the Arabs say, "Load not upon to-day the burdens of the years, for each day shall bring thee its portion."

Perhaps you suspect that I appreciate in some measure your bewilderment at being thrust into real mission work, and that I also have a dim perception of the enormity of your task, while (you don't know this) I have a fine sort of envy that you have been chosen to step into the place left vacant by your friend's death.

I am not so sure but that this work of helping a nation to its rebirth through the training of individuals, is not among the greatest efforts of civilized man. It is assuredly greater than turning over ancient dustheaps, and perhaps means more than recording sales of soap and silk, or even writing letters.

Why should I feel the throb of envy at being left out, when there is not the slightest reason for my being counted in? I wonder if you can guess why?

Give your opportunity a fair trial, and remember I am one of those designated to help you, and, besides, am most desirous that you lean a trifle harder upon my arm than you do upon the others. Will you? It is strong and

anxious to serve and guard you most of all.
Herein I am selfish again, nevertheless, am
Faithfully your friend,
John Denise Whitelaw.

I cannot but be glad some one thought me worth being counted in on something big and tremendous. Was it Kate's extremity or God's opportunity? There has lurked in that secret, sealed place in my heart of hearts, where I keep all my good impulses and highest aspirations, a wish that I, too, might some time be found alongside such women as Miss Delight and Dr. Mercy, doing real, tangible, constructive work of some sort. I had thought it might be perhaps in one of our great, needy cities at home, New York possibly, that I could find an outlet for what I have felt I could do, after my three years are ended out here. My preparatory work has begun, and whether I will measure up or not, time will reveal. I only know I'll try.

Never blame the absent until he is present.—Arab Proverb.

CHAPTER SIX

Another Day.

The whole world is akin, is it not? And everybody has some sort of a good heart if you know how to find it. I saw a little child standing at the 'ain the other day. Oh, of course, I have not explained that *'ain* is the Arabic for fountain.

There is one near our house, and mother, what do you think that little girl was wearing? A woman's discarded blouse, and she was so tiny that it almost dragged on the ground, while her little arms and hands were quite engulfed in the sleeves. She had on no other garment, poor little mite. I sent and questioned the mother, and learned that she was so poor she had no clothing for the child. Our new Dorcas Society is the result of the need of that little Moslem girl.

I asked the women, Moslem and Christian, I had come to know in town, to meet here and sew for her, I providing the materials. In one afternoon we made all she needed for the present. And then we sent for little Rahmey (mercy), and our good Ferrud gave her a bath in the kitchen before the fire, and when we had clothed her in the new garments,

she was so sweet and kissable. The mother was quite too grateful, for the next day she appeared with a bundle of faggots on her head—just little pieces of wood she had picked up on the beach and by the roadside, which she presented to me, saying in a shy, formal manner, "I have nothing to offer thee, *ya sitt*, but with these bits thou canst mend thy fire." There is joy in service like this. I wonder if one might not call it the "in-as-much-service"? I am learning a little each day of a new kind of joy.

Kate left the work well organized and I am trying to carry it along as near her model as I can. My advisers, C. D., Mr. Whitelaw and the Consul, advised finishing the upper story to the house Kate had already begun, for we are much cramped for room. Then we can put the drawing and dining-rooms to their proper uses. As it is, the children occupy them as dormitories, and the court is their dining-room.

And a Night.

Ah, how still it is. The only sound is the crunch of the heel of a belated employee at the silk factory below us, and the eternal lap, lap, of the waves on the shore. A storm is brewing, for the sea has been "giving the news" all day and now is become a dull, muffled roar.

How the days have lagged since your cable saying you were coming. I had counted each one off as on a rosary, and now—I have come to the end, where

I have found a cross. Your letter came to-day. Dearest mother, how did it happen? You were never careless in your life, and to think you were so near me as to be going on the steamer and then to trip and break your hip, and have to be ignominiously carted back to a hospital in an ambulance! Mother, mother! And I cannot be with you—I am tied fast here. I am glad you went to St. Luke's. I shall do my bead counting all over again, until you are quite well, only I'll slip them along by minutes and hours instead of days, with prayers, darling.

But I wish you had not said you had quite abandoned the idea of coming. I suppose the doctor knows, but he need not have said you were not as young as you were once, and that the journey even after you are well again, must be postponed indefinitely.

A Brand-new Day.

I sometimes pinch myself, I do really, to see if it is I, and if I am awake and actually in Asia, or if I am seeing all this strangeness and newness in a dream from which I shall presently waken in my bed at home.

Some one has characterized the domain of the Turk as the Land of Yesterday. To me it is a land of pure delight. I am not one of those Westerners who are impatient with the slow-moving East, for after living here a while one suddenly begins to experience things: that there are no elevated trains or

electric-surface cars with harsh clang of bell, no restless, hurrying throngs upon whose tense faces competition has been using its graving tool. I revel in the absence of hurry and strenuous living. One goes for a walk, for instance, and does not attempt to do stunts in sprinting, but saunters along to "smell the air," looking at the changing, moodful sea, the clouds drifting along the mountain crests, and the ever-changing lights on sea and shore, turning home at last, with hands o'erflowing with cyclamens and poppies, narcissi and flaming anemones, to a late dinner, eaten perhaps seated on cushions on your flat housetop, with a *skemla* inlaid with mother-of-pearl before you, on which a soft-eyed maid places relays of food cooked to your taste, until your appetite is satisfied. After you have cleansed your hands and mouth of any trace of food in the scented water the *sana'ah* pours slowly over your fingers from a brass ewer covered with wonderful hammered-in designs, you settle down among your cushions to enjoy your evening in a contentment the Western world might well be envious of and imitate, too, to some extent. Then, if you are so blessed (if you are a man), while you "drink" your *nargeeleh* your wife, in flowing garments, with a rose in her hair, fetches her *a'ude* and fingers the strings in your favourite airs, singing them softly the while. Overhead the stars drift silently by, and night deepens on mountains and sea, amid a calm and quiet we know little of in our busy, Occidental life. Not a

sound breaks the perfect stillness save a passing footfall now and then or the intoning of camel bells away up on the carriage road, mingled with the omnipresent sigh of the sea. Delectable odours from your garden of pleasant fruits and flowers seem to have form and being as they are presented to you by the gentlest of breezes.

This perfection of quiet one grows to love, and strange as it may seem to you, I am becoming more and more enamoured of it, and this town in particular as a place to live in.

After the house was quiet for the night, I took my chair out on the balcony and watched the moon rise out of a notch in the mountains and wondered how I happen to be here. I am getting wonted, as you are apt to say, and find life full and not unattractive in many ways. The children are so lovable, and I assure you they keep me guessing what they will do next. We had an entertainment the other day, at the end of the term, wherein some of them took part in little pieces recited and sung. Tiny Nebeeha was the star performer. She is four years old and quite the most original of all the children. Her little piece was to be a surprise for me. She is so small that Miss Dear stood her up on a chair that she might be seen, and she began: "I am little Nabeeha, I can do many things, compliments I do not know how to make, but I can hand you this bouquet," and she was supposed to present me a nosegay, and I was to kiss her hand, but what did

she do but coldly pass me by without a glance, and present it to C. D., who with Betty had come on for the occasion. Mightily flattered, he lifted her high in his arms and kissed her rosy lips. But she, once on her feet again, grasped his hand and kissed it before raising it to her forehead, in token of respect. Was it not pretty?

The innate dignity of life here is impressive. Courtesy is as natural as breathing, and none so low in the social scale, but knows the amenities of life as thoroughly as the aristocrat. The salutations most employed contain such words as "peace," "blessed," "praise," "good," and all coupled with the name of Allah. They greet each other in the morning—a passing stranger or friend, it matters not whom, with, "May thy morning be good," or, "May thy day be blessed," which brings the reply, "Greater happiness to thy morning," or, "And thy day be blessed." They inquire after your health, "May it be God's will that thy health is good." How they live in Him. "In Him we live and move and have our being." You offer refreshments to a guest, who partakes, and then with hand on his heart, he says, "Mayst thou long be spared to dispense hospitality," to which you respond, "May thy life be prolonged."

The departing guest, after asking permission to go, is furthered on his way with "Go in peace," or, "Make it a custom to visit us." One starts on a journey with one's friends praying, "Allah go with thee," and, "Allah make it smooth." And to those

left behind they say, "As thou hast sent forth, so mayst thou receive again."

You ask a mother, not of her children, but "the blesseds," and add, "Allah preserve them to thee," especially if they are sons. The most beautiful of all is the way they say good-night, "Mayst thou witness the morning with good," to which you respond, "And thou upon the good." It is so difficult to put into cold English idioms this wonderful Oriental imagery of speech—so warm and full of ripened sentiment. And when all compliments fail, they fall back upon, "May He prolong thy years," or, "May God give thee peace," and, oh, yes, they do not say thank you either as we do, but, "May thy good be increased," or, "Peace to thy mouth," or, "Peace to thy hands," as the occasion may require.

Inshallah, and *bismallah,* "May it be the will of God," and, "In the name of God," are two very common expressions, tokens of how they link every act with God.

It is curious to see a cook begin to dish up the dinner in the name of the blessed Trinity, and the sewing woman never thinks of putting shears into a new garment without first saying, *Umbarak,* "a blessing to the wearer." If I could I would clothe my descriptions in rhyme as the only fitting way to adequately express the great beauty of words one hears many times daily.

Some Experiences for You.

One day I am going to write a whole tome on the pests of the East,—not smallpox, or malaria, or typhoid fever, or even bubonic plague, but about those things which creep and crawl and bite and sting. I'll have one chapter on snakes. There are some harmless ones which are just as good to frighten one to death as the vipers which launch you into eternity in twenty minutes after a nip at you. We found one in the kitchen this afternoon!

Another will tell the secret of how to catch and disable fleas, so that their jump and tickle will be put permanently out of commission. And as to flies, —there are uncounted millions for the one who shall introduce the newest effective swatter to combat the trillions and quadrillions of the lineal descendants of one of the plagues—which one was it?—of Egypt.

The third plague is still with us, and I would be willing to give a sum commensurate with my relief incident thereupon, to the one who shall tell how adequately to deal with that particular legacy of Aaron's rod. Can't someone discover how to induce race suicide among them?

The heading of one chapter will read, "What I know about B-flats, their habitats, etc. Also mosquitos, both of which are sleep banishers and night prowlers." I might add a word or two regarding scorpions and centipedes, and big, hairy spiders (harmless), not forgetting the lizard, which scam-

pers up the side of the house, and the solemn, bulging-eyed chameleon on the wall and wayside rock, both of which are harmless, but interesting because respectful and keep their distance, as is the white Abu Brice, which frequents the inside of the house and hides behind pictures and books.

Twice lately I nearly came into collision with scorpions. I reached out for a book and found one crawling over it, and the other time, a specially large one disputed with me for possession of my hairbrush, and *won,* I assure you. The sting is not very poisonous, but is exquisite agony for twenty-four hours.

The Victor Day.

What a mother you are. You have never outgrown your delight in making people unexpectedly happy. I have many lovely memories of the unanticipated with which you delighted to crowd my young life. Shall I tell you one? Once, when we were living in Deanston, and I was quite a small child. I came home from school, ravenously hungry. You had gone out, but on the dining-room table I found a bowl of bread and creamy milk ready for me, and covering it was a piece of paper on which you had printed, "Mother has gone to see a sick baby." The paper has disappeared, but not the memory that mother knew I would be hungry that long-ago afternoon.

Well, to-day I heard the honk of a car near the

house, and there was C. D.'s coming down the road with only Deebna in it, and a great packing box in the tonneau. By the time Deebna had slowed down at the gate I was there. "El Khawajah, say you like this box. We get from custom house this day," was his greeting in his lovely, quaint English.

"What is in it? Who sent it?"

"Khawajah say she come from America."

I could hardly wait for our man to get the cover off, I was so excited. One board was ripped loose, and I got a glimpse of mahogany. "A table! Just what I need between the drawing-room windows," I exclaimed. But when another and yet another was removed, I was sure it was a Martha Washington sewing table. A wee bit of disappointment crept into my heart, as Kate's is here and in my room. But *no!* When all the papers were off, it was a Victrola! Oh, you dear. I just cried for joy, and then rang the big emergency bell and everybody came running, children, teachers and servants and nearby neighbours who have learned our ways. The children dropped on the floor and we found seats for the grown-ups, and then I started it. By blessed good luck the first record I unwrapped was that of the Music Lovers Choral Union singing "America." A patriotic Arabic hymn has been set to that tune, and as the opening bars poured out of that box, I jumped to my feet and so did every one else, for they recognized the tune, and we all began to sing, I in English, the others in Arabic, and with that

wonder instrument leading we sang all four verses as though at a Fourth of July celebration.

"What is it?" "Where did you get it?" "Who made it?" "Where *did* you get it?" "How did they get inside of it?" "Mashallah, how clever you Americans are," were some of the remarks which rained upon me. Wee Zehra went up to it, patted it with her little fat hand, then came to me and said, *"Ba'ad, ba'ad,"* "more, more." And we had more and more, and I shut my eyes and saw the Metropolitan Opera House with Caruso and Schumann-Heinck and Melba and all the rest on the stage, singing for me alone. How the Pilgrims' Chorus rang out, and who was it sang Elizabeth's prayer? But perhaps the one I loved the best was Schumann-Heinck singing "Stille Nacht." I am so pleased you sent some hymns. We wound up with the Doxology, sung with Arabic words.

Thank you, thank you for this newest thought for me and the unanticipated pleasure which will last for many a day, and be solace for lonesome hours. And the Volga Boat song. You did not forget my love for Russian music, *and* the Hallelujah Chorus! But the most wonderful of all was the nightingale song. I can well believe your elucidation on the record, that a hundred records were spoiled before a perfect one was secured. I am so grateful and surprised that I am incoherent, but I am simply overwhelmed, you blessed mother.

Roll Call for You.

I have been intending to give you the roster of our household, for put into English it has a strange sound to Western ears.

Teachers.

Miss Dear	Miss Enough
Miss Emerald	Miss Jessamine

Children.

Flower	Sun	Aristocracy
Diamond	Darling	Pearl
The Last	Happiness	Rose
Merciful	Peace	India
Queen	Full Moon	Violette
Meekness	Kindness	Beautiful
Apple	Carnation	Joy
Lily	Russia	Clever
Spain	France	Lady of the House

The servants are: Servant of God, Little Dear, only she is a great big blessed one. The Mother of Jacob has charge of the nursery, and Good is the housemaid.

I have succeeded in memorizing all these names in Arabic, and am able to say my Bible verse at supper with the rest. You should have heard them exclaim the first time I tried to say one, *Sellim timmik,* "Peace to thy mouth," and I felt very proud when they added, "Now thou canst speak our language." I can also say the Lord's Prayer quite rapidly and

carry on a conversation all alone if the theme be not too lofty.

The Edge of the Day.

The mellowness of the Arabic is what makes it different from any other language spoken in this part of the world. There is nothing young about it. There has been plenty of time for it to ripen, for nothing is ever done in a hurry in this land of leisure. The idioms are especially rich and beautiful. I am minded of this by the heading I have put for you. When evening approaches we say, not the close of day, but the edge of it, or the last of it, an expression probably due to the way the sun sinks below the western sea. When there remains but the edge visible, it is indeed, the edge of the day, for directly it disappears below the horizon, the night is nigh.

Here is another age-long idiom. This afternoon I saw a Bedouin woman on the road, and to be polite, asked her where she was going. Her quaint reply was, "My face is set towards Trablus." Wasn't there Someone whose face was set towards Jerusalem once? In spite of the centuries, the speech of the people is cast in the same mould as when He walked these Syrian ways, and loved and healed the poor and sick.

It is the edge of my day, and the time I love best. Supper is over and in the old porch chair with the high back, I am sitting on the balcony to watch the

evening deepen and the daylight fade away and be lost in the darkness. Presently I shall hear a soft footfall, and there will be Ferrud bringing my lovely Damascus carved table to place beside me. And I shall know what is coming. I shall know she has slipped down to my rose geranium hedge and plucked a leaf, to be dropped in the water already on the fire for my cup of coffee. The water will have been duly sweetened and now she will add the leaf, and when it comes to a boil, the pulverized Mocha will be as carefully dropped in, and as carefully manipulated—three times it may boil quite up to the top of the pot, and form a *mendil*—"veil" of foam—and three times gently lifted off by the straight-out handle, and softly tapped on the range before being poured into my hammered brass coffee pot, like the table from Damascus. Then in the centre of a tray adorned with peacocks and things graven on it, and flanked by the tiny cups and saucers, it will be placed. Again I hear steps, and get a whiff of coming joy. I shall drink the concoction, and think I am smelling the rose geranium hedge, instead of drinking coffee.

Ah, there comes the moon, and it is so bright, I can see to write without the aid of candle or lamp. Down in the wady of the brook in which never a drop of water is seen, the startling cry of the jackals sounded but now, weird and plaintive like the wail of a lost child. Over at our neighbour's by the sea I hear the beat on a deirbecker, accompanied by

the soft clapping of hands marking the rhythm. Someone is dancing, one of the seven daughters, probably. A wheeling, blundering bat sailed by close to my face a minute ago, and the cicadas in the eucalyptus tree shrill out their note, while faintly borne on the breeze I hear the muezzin's call from the market place. The lights have gone out across the way and up on the hillside. Far off in the direction of the *Nahr Ibrahim*—River Adonis—I see the moving lights of two carriages coming down the road, bringing passengers from the last train, which does not return to Beyrout, but "sleeps" at Aintain, the terminus. I'll wait until they get to the carob tree just beyond the old mill, and watch them twinkle in and out of sight, until at last they roll across the bridge. Then I will go to bed myself. The edge of the day is swallowed up of night, albeit is as light as day. Good-night, *ya ummy*, "oh, my mother."

There have been long silences—wide gaps in this volume. I have had everything to learn from the beginning,—language,—how to take up the dropped stitches of Kate's work, and go on from where she left off. It has been Ignorance attempting the part of Experience, and everything was so strange and unknown, that the physical part has been a new trying endeavour to simply keep going and trying to catch up. It is nearly a year since dear Kate went

away, and my hands are tired holding on while I have been learning a new trade.

The almond trees have bloomed and faded, the oranges have wafted their luscious perfume up from the garden and begun to form the tiny round buttons which give promise of golden fulfilment later on, and this book is still unfinished. I did not have the time nor energy to write once a month, even. But you have had letters to tell of my well being. But now I am beginning to breathe more freely, and I hope this intimate book will not remain full of blank pages as at present.

The Syrian Flower Year.

It is springtime, when the *bulbul* nests and the *hussun* lights for a brief space on the tip of a swaying branch, and trills and chirps because the winter is over and gone. The almond trees usher this beautiful season in early in February,—*Shabot* the Fitful, which "opens an eye and shuts an eye," frowns darkly one minute and smiles blandly the next. "No matter how much of a rumpus it kicks up, the smell of summer is in it," the weather-wise say, even when the winds in their fury tear the tiles from your roof and the rains descend and beat, and thunder roars. The storm never brings back the winter, and by the time the almond harbingers drop their white petals, the orange trees radiate sweetness and loveliness, and the peach and apricots not to be outdone, are clad in pink and white along

with the plums. Later on the pomegranates blaze with scarlet bells, which somehow must belong to the fairies and be rung at night, when mortals sleep. And they hold on to their colour, too, even in the perfected fruit. Underfoot in the fields vivid with the green of growing grain, by the roadside and in the crannies of the plentiful rocks, are myriads and millions of cyclamens, gaudy scarlet poppies, and purple, red and white anemones—the Rose of Sharon. Up by the Castle are quantities of blue irises, which are not indigenous, but evidences of the Crusading occupation and the longing of some one for the familiar, and a bit of the home land in the inhospitable domain of the Saracen.

The black calla abounds and is very curious and a great favourite of mine. It is shaped like a calla, only instead of being white it is green, with great, covering splotches of jet black on it, as though some one had showered it plentifully with ink. It has a disagreeable odour, which makes it unpopular, but I carefully tend one which appeared in my garden of its own free will. Squills grow wild and have a whorl of delicate white blossoms, which are very pretty, while everywhere you see Queen Anne's Lace. Scotch broom abounds, too, and heather on the heights. The thistles are very attractive. There are the great yellow pompoms and light purple ones and pinks, very thorny, but a joy when massed in a big brass bowl on the piano.

Narcissus vies with the commoner flowers,—the

cyclamen, poppies and anemones, as though trying to be the most plentiful, and the children come home from their walks with their little hands full of it. Of course my flower garden is a delight during the rainy season and spring. It is not large, like Miss Delight's, but it is full of the same roses and geraniums, callas and violets. I have been carefully tending a wistaria vine I brought from Trablus, but it grows very slowly. The towering pepper trees Kate raised from the seed, sowing them first in a flower-pot. They are big trees now and have transformed the garden, giving it shade and conserving the moisture in the dry, rainless summers. You know, don't you, that spice pepper does not grow on these trees, but on a vine, somewhere in the tropics. There is a promising lilac bush, which dear Kate loved and lavished care upon because it reminded her of those in her childhood's garden. It should bloom in some near springtime. And I wish you could see the care we bestow upon this small garden place when the rains cease. I practise dry farming in it after a very limited fashion. After giving my roses a big drink in the trench dug around the roots, it is filled in with dry earth, which holds the moisture down where it is needed, and this one watering suffices for a week. If the wind could be depended upon to blow when the beans and roses needed to be watered and make that American wind mill from *Illinois* turn with sufficient velocity to send the water through the conduits to the gardens,

it would be a comfort. But after the *kublie,* the southwest wind, ceases at the end of July my vegetables and flowers languish. If I only had an oil engine to pump when wind power is lacking, I would be glad. There! Is the hint broad enough? I am sure we will be very grateful if you should feel inclined to give this institution the best one you can afford. I am putting all my pennies and Kate's, too, this year into the alterations she would have made if she were here. Ah me! She is in a fairer springtime far away.

This may well be called Discovery Day, as you will see from what follows. Pure water is always a problem here, and that which comes from the public wells has a very peculiar taste,—is a little brackish and seems thick somehow, when you swallow it. We have always used it, Kate did, until one day I raised a glass I had been drinking from to the light and beheld a gay and festive dance going on in it, in which myriads of tiny white creatures were engaged. After that I concluded I would have it boiled and thus perhaps overcome the many cases of indigestion the children and I constantly developed.

But cooked water palls after a time, and I decided to clean out an unused well in the Yuseph Effendeh garden of oranges—the Mandarin variety is what that high-sounding name means. This well is supposed to be the oldest one in town and had not been cleaned, no one knew when, nor used for years.

Accordingly I had a windlass rigged up with a kerosene oil tin converted into a bucket by means of a piece of wood nailed across the end we had opened, and while not very fancy, it did the work.

After emptying the well and the bottom was supposed to have been reached, we found heaps and heaps of broken jars, which had to be removed. There was a huge pile outside when the real bottom was struck, and some of it of a kind no one had ever seen before, which fact demonstrates how long it had been since the last cleaning.

Then I had another idea. There is an underground passage in the Castle leading to fresh water. All Crusading castles have one against a time of siege. I argued, if our well was the oldest in J., this passage would naturally end in it, and so I instructed the workmen to be alert and see if they could not find it. But they could only see the baskets let down to put the broken jars in. Then Abdullah went down to inspect the work, and in coming up he found an opening, perhaps fifteen feet from the surface, and came in much excitement with the news. I was as excited as he, and after providing him with a lantern, candles and matches, followed to investigate myself.

Down he swung into the well, called up when he reached the opening, and said he had found a cedar plank, six or eight inches thick at right angles to the opening on which he was standing. This opening, by the aid of the lantern, showed a stairway

leading up towards the house. Presently I heard his voice seemingly under my feet, that he had come to the end of the steps, where the passage was roofed over with a wide flat stone, and that he thought he could open it up from the surface, and I could see for myself this underground thing. So out he came and soon uncovered and removed the stone, and sure enough, I dropped through the opening and went down into the heart of my well! A spot the sun had never penetrated to before. The stairway was built of dressed stone steps, sides and roof, and while there were but ten or twelve steps before the surface was reached, I am sure somewhere within our grounds I shall find the connecting link with that leading into the Castle. The continuity was broken, apparently, when a building was erected, and the ground levelled for the foundation.

The water is pure, and much less brackish than that in the public wells, so that I feel a good job was done in cleaning it out, and incidentally in discovering the passageway. Won't Mr. Whitelaw be interested when he hears about my turning into an archæologist!

At last this book is full. I think I can promise you that the future issues of my Oriental history will reach you with greater regularity.

The people of this world are as passengers on a ship. It moves on with them while they sleep.—Arab Proverb.

CHAPTER SEVEN

One of the sights I have longed to see ever since I could remember is a cedar tree on Mt. Lebanon. And do you know why? When I was quite small I heard our old rector, Dr. DeLong, tell about a man who was good and true and might be likened to a Cedar of Lebanon. I do not remember anything else about it, simply the comparison. One day I told this to Miss Delight and my life-long desire, and she exclaimed, "That must have been said about one of our missionaries, whom the Syrians always called *Arz Libnan,* a Cedar of Lebanon." And she did not forget my wish, for the other day she wrote to say a party was going for a fortnight's camping under the Cedars, *Arz ar Rub,* and would I not like to go along.

When I found I could arrange to be gone that length of time, there was but one answer to that proposition, and—but I will begin at the beginning, as you like to have me. How often have you told me, "Child, don't jumble your stories. Be orderly." I can hear your very tones in those last words. I only wish you could have been with us, *be* with us, for I am at the beginning of something very wonderful and new.

By the way of preface I would say that we came

yesterday, and that the party consists of twelve men and women, mostly young like your daughter, and complete strangers to her.

Miss Delight is the chaperone, and Mr. Whitelaw, who seems somehow to get invited to most things I happen to belong to, is one of the party, and the only one I really know. I mention this fact, lest you think I have had something to do with it. Miss D. did her own inviting, and asked no suggestions from anyone. But everybody likes Mr. W., and it is rather jolly to have him around. I have missed him this year, I'll whisper to you. But mother dear, think how few persons I know in this far-off land.

We are living in tents, Miss Delight and I sharing one together. There is one large one, which is dining-room and sitting-room combined. We sleep on mattresses on the ground, and eat in the same primitive fashion. I enjoy it immensely, this getting away from conventions.

Now I am ready to begin with my tale of the Cedars of God, as the Bible calls them. The long day on horseback, all the way up, up, ever higher and higher, until we pitched our tents under the thick branches of these old trees, was back-breaking, but glorious.

The month is September—the most glorious of the Syrian year, when the Hunter's moon rides high, and we scan the sky for The Giant,—Orion to come back as herald for Sirius the Lustrous. And

we can see them if we wait long enough before going to bed. I had never really seen the stars until I came to live under the shadow of the Lebanon.

We were well out in the Kura, riding in and out among the olive trees by sun-up. The grey leaves glistened with dew; the tang of the dried sagebush fire heating *tannur* and *sajh* for baking, crept into our nostrils with a clean, aromatic smell. A church we passed gave a greeting of incense and sanctity; a woman with her empty water jar on her shoulder lowered it, and going up, kissed a corner of the insenate building, reverently crossing herself, ere she passed by to "fill" at the fountain. We met the train of mules with its gaily decorated and belled leader, laden with dripping packs of snow cut from the higher parts of the mountains, en route to the city that the glasses of sherbat (accent the last syllable, sher*bat*) served in café and home, be nice and cool and refreshing for those forced to abide in town. I hope C. D. gets some. Little did I dream when as a child I read in *The Talisman* of the Saracen serving drinks cooled with snow from Lebanon, that I would ever quaff similar refreshment, least of all go to a Lebanon snow bank, and camp near it for a couple of weeks.

We ate fresh figs with the dew and the coolness of the night still upon them, and grapes from which no rough hand had brushed the bloom, as we rested under a spreading carob tree,—perhaps the very one the Prodigal Son ate the husks from. This is

certainly a Far Country for some of us. It was the *natur,* "watchman," of a vineyard, who politely supplied this most welcome refreshment, and a passing Rebecca lowered her brimming jar just filled at the gushing fountain, and gave us a cool draught as well as "God be with you." Still another let us buy of her hot, fresh, crisp bread, thin as paper, we saw her bake and peel off the *sajh,* and, oh, so good. And what sturdy, splendid folk these mountain people are, straight backed, inclined to be taller than the lowlanders, alert and industrious.

In a village across the deep gorge of the river, Abu Ali, there lives in the summertime, Shamuny, the dove-eyed, the peerless washerwoman for the mission. In this high altitude voices carry far, and when we were quite opposite the village, one of the muleteers called, "Ya-a-a-a-a Shamuny. Ya-a-a-a-a Shamuny. Bring eggs and milk and chickens to the cedars of the Lord to-morrow morning." From away across the deep valley we heard, *Aye, aye, sama'ah.* "Yes, yes, I hear." We could see her also standing in her doorway waving something white in her hand. Sure enough she was here this morning with supplies before any of us had crawled out of our tents.

We passed through towns and villages, some sizeable with brave new tile-roofed houses, evidences of hard-earned money over in America or Australia or Brazil, and everywhere and always we found kindly interest and courteous salutation.

After leaving the last town, Besherreh, the climb up was stiff over a winding, curving bridlepath. Once we rode through white sea sand and beside water-worn rocks. I would like to invite the unbelievers in the deluge to explain how that sand thrown up by some sea or other got at that elevation, for if they can, I'll too, refuse to believe that "Noah he did build an ark."

It is not necessary to tell about this clump of trees. You can read all about it in books, how many there are, etc. But what I would like to have you see, mother, dear, is the way the big lordly things rear themselves, and how they spread their branches, as though inviting us mortals to lie at ease on their thick, springy greenness and there rest awhile and get acquainted with the cloud-dotted sky and its Maker.

I wish, too, I could make a record of the sigh of the wind and the whisper of the breeze passing from tree to tree for you, that your Victor machine might repeat it in your ears.

As night deepened, although weary, we could not forbear to heed the word of those of our party who knew, to wait up for the moon which "rules by night." It was cold—we are at an elevation of some 6000 feet and more—and warmly wrapped up we waited and watched. I have never seen such starlight as glinted and sparkled through the black cedar branches, and when the great white disk of the moon slowly shouldered itself above the encir-

cling Ras el Qadib, it was as though the mountain receded and gave way to the resplendent Queen of Night, that she might fling afar her robes of trailing light.

Absorbed, we watched and silently adored. Then a voice broke the stillness, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork," softly spoken, in which we all joined as we looked and worshipped in the words of the old Psalmist, clear through to the end. One thing you did well with me, mother dearest, you made me when a child, commit to memory wonderful portions of scripture. I rejoiced last night that I could measure up to something with these wonderful Bible students, even though it were only to repeat a Psalm.

Oh, yes, the party is charming. Everybody is nice and agreeable, but—these trees with their whisperings and sighs, bidding us remember the ages and centuries they have been here, while kingdoms have risen and fallen, and nations and races played their parts in the Drama of Man to their final exit; the sky and clouds and mountains with shepherds and cropping sheep, these are the things we have come to see. I could wish to be here alone with God and this wondrous, majestic beauty He has created.

One of the trees is immense. It took eight of us to gird it, the tips of our fingers touching only, our arms stretched to the limit. The Old Guardian some one dubbed it, because it has been here since the days when Hiram of Tyre's workmen cut down

its companions for Solomon's Temple. It was left behind for some reason, and has withstood tempest and cold and summer heat to shelter us of the Twentieth Century, from a little-dreamed-of land and speaking a language which was not formed on the tongue of man until it was some two thousand years old. Its branches grow quite low, and I have scrambled up into its capacious lap with a book, my bound in Russia one, only my attention will wander to the cushions of green on the boughs, and I long to pillow my head on them and be swayed by the breeze, then off to a great field go my eyes where had been wheat, but now golden stubble, above which an eagle soared but now, with scarcely a movement of his wide-spread wings,—away up into the blue he headed until he became a greyish speck against the sky.

The tinkle of a bell on a browsing black and white goat comes to my ears and the call of a strayed lamb to its ewe from across the wady. What peace, what holy calm, what surcease for tired bodies and brains!

Off to the south I see the cleft in the globe made by the erosion of the river as it ate its way to the sea. I can trace its whole length as though made in a clay map by a human hand.

There are other people here, besides ourselves, I have discovered. Up on the crest of one of several small hills in the Cedar enclosure is a tiny chapel, sacred and dear to the people. When I wandered

off by myself this morning, I came upon a couple of women laboriously climbing the slope to it on hands and knees, because being childless, they had heard some one say God would respect their desire for motherhood if they went to church that way. Their faith was sublime, and let us hope some day they will become joyful mothers of children.

Another Day.

Of all my experiences in this land of wonder and delight, the one I am now enjoying is quite the best. We seem to have found ourselves in a place much like the one the Master invited His disciples to, "the place apart." The great throbbing world has slipped away, quite out of sight, and we are face to face with nature and primitive life, where the trees and mountains become so intimate that you learn their language of lights and shadows and serenity, and forget to be tired or that down below in the lowlands is hurry and rush and competition and hard work.

To-day we watched some shepherds "abiding with their sheep," just outside the wall. One especially interested us. He stood leaning on his staff, half hidden in his sheep-skin coat with its huge, protruding shoulders, which not only sheds rain like a sloping roof, but is capacious enough to shelter a new-born lamb from heat or cold or wet. This man we learned was on watch, while his companions rested and drew their evening meal of bread and

cheese from their "scrips,"—the sheep-skin bag they all carry.

As the shadows lengthened the part I most wanted to see was enacted. There is a circular enclosure near by, with but one entrance. This is the sheep-fold, toward which I noticed the sheep had turned their faces. As they nosed and hunted for the scant herbage among the stones and rocks, one of the shepherds called. I cannot describe the guttural sounds he uttered—they were not euphonious, but from among hundreds of sheep scattered around I saw one and another and another lift its head, listen for a repetition of the familiar voice saying, *Ta'a, ta'a,* "come, come," and then start toward it. Only those who knew the voice responded. The rest kept on eating. "A stranger will they not follow." The called ones went after their shepherd, to the fold, all but one or two, which a well-directed stone from the shepherd's hand admonished and they came running. At the door he stood—"I am the door of the sheep," and as they passed in he counted and scrutinized each one, touching them with his staff as they crossed the threshold. I saw him hold back a ewe whose face was bleeding from contact with thorns, to be tenderly washed and oiled later on. Once we heard two shepherds call their flocks alternately, and it was a pretty sight, those sheep separating themselves to collect around the voice which they knew and followed into the fold.

Next we saw a goatherd coming over the brow

of the hill, driving before him his black charges. Did you know that sheep follow a leader, but that goats must be driven? They, too, passed under the rod into the fold, each one carefully looked at and most of them called by name. We asked a shepherd to tell us the names of some of his flock, and here they are: Meliky, the Queen, was pointed out, because she likes to walk right at the head of the flock; One-eyed, which would jump down a slope and fell on a cruel thorn and lost an eye; The Wanderer, addicted to straying away out of sound of the shepherd's voice; the Lost One, which cost the shepherd many anxious hours hunting among the rocks and wadys until at last he found "the sheep that was lost," on a ledge it had climbed to seeking a bit of grass, and was caught fast by a low-growing thorn tree. Others were, Black face, and Brown ear, and Torn tail, Shaitan (Satan), the great ram which keeps the flock in order, and the Orphan, the best beloved, whose mother died when she was born.

Do you see, mother dearest, what the "comfort of the staff" means? Care, protection, safe resting places, and sleepless, tireless love.

The sun sank into the distant sea ere the last sheep was safely folded, and the door secured against intruders. Not alone by the curious lock with a wooden key was that accomplished, but one of the shepherds covered with his *burnus* laid himself on his sheep-skin cloak, squarely in front of the *bab*,—"door," to sleep a little, and watch the more.

No one might go in or out excepting over his body. I will lay me down now and sleep, and when my candle is out, I shall say alone in the dark the old Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd," and I shall put the emphasis on *my*.

Night Time, after Another Wonder Day.

To-day we took a long walk, and a rough one it was across the wheat field of the soaring eagle, till we came to the edge of the world, where if we had taken one more step we would have walked off into space. We started out to find where the old Kadisha River came from, tumbling and jumping from somewhere in the mountain. We had a merry time scrambling down the winding goat paths to the source, some hundreds of feet below, where was an opening in the side of the great, rock-bound mountain, as large as a good-sized room. Out of this cavern the ice-cold torrent rushed noiselessly and swiftly, as if to try its strength now it had emerged into the open. Then it got in such a hurry that it had no time to dodge around the rocks in its way, but gathered itself and took a mighty leap down to a lower level, roaring and kicking back its spume and spray in happy defiance.

"I am on my way to work for the sons of men," it called back, but never stayed its forward rush, leaping from the heights, often hanging up delicate, fairy rainbows as parting gifts, keeping steadily on, fretting against the rocky sides of the æons-old road

its predecessors had carved, ever hurrying, running, dashing along, giving of its fullness to the *jells* near by, planted with vegetables, until it reached the plains where men toiled for the harvests of grain and fruits.

I can see the eager, watching, waiting, expectant gardens of orange and apricot, parched and thirsty in the rainless summer, hear the plash of the bare-kneed toiler as he opens sluices and directs the refreshing draught of water against the hot soil which drinks deep and passes on the life-giving fluid. It truly is the "water of life," as we used to sing. How cold it is, too! We put a melon in it, only to see after a while that it had split in twain. From the "roots of the mountains" it comes, where is that limitless, God-stored supply, "pure as crystal."

Absorbed in the majesty of the scene, I drew nearer and nearer to the brink, to trace the entire length of this wonder river, so close that I felt restraining hands drawing me back to safety, some one fearing lest the absorption become fascination and I follow the flow to the depths below.

"Thank you, Mr. Whitelaw," I said, at last turning my eyes from the ravishing view.

"How did you know it was I?" he enquired, still keeping hold of me.

"How? You are always near when I need—help," I told him, looking up at him, and got one of those hidden smiles, I have somehow missed, because absent for so long. But this is one of the

very few times I have really seen him since that day when—— I wonder if he has forgotten when he offered me a gift, of which he has never spoken since. But that smile to-day—but, we turned and joined the others who were making merry over the lunch of cucumbers and *sajh* bread.

When we were about to return to the camp, and stood near the edge of the world again, some one began "Before the mountains were brought forth or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God." I felt as I listened that I was getting acquainted with God up here, and that there were no words of my own to employ. Nothing seems to fit but those from the old Book.

And how small have been our aims and desires. The trees are good correctives, thrusting themselves up, up as though to measure themselves against the everlasting mountain which reaches higher still towards the sky, some four thousand feet and more.

And now the river has spoken. This laughing, joyful river hastening down to brighten folks and flowers and fruits alike, is another proof of how we are all children of the Great I Am, who made us and it and the mountains with its trees and silences and flocks and herds, and who expects us to co-ordinate all our doings of help and inspiration, that we may apprehend the reason of existence, and be apprehended of God in the final analysis.

I am getting glimmerings of great life truths,

which my college course, travels and books have not furnished me. There is an Arab proverb which sums it up. "The people of this world are as passengers on a ship. It moves on with them while they sleep." I think I have slept most of my life, but I am grateful that the Captain did not put me off at some port, but has kept me on board knowing that I would waken. I am beginning to arouse and observe that I have left much of the familiar far behind; that I have moved on to strange delightsome places, where the air is invigorating, the impulse to be compelling, and great souls smile at me and hold out welcoming hands, and I am glad, and am trying to respond and fit myself to company them that I may attain to this fellowship. I am glad and thankful I am no longer a drone. My entrance into a tiny portion of real constructive work was tragic—but I am *in*. And that picket fence and what it encloses will look very dear when I get there two days from now.

To-morrow we go, and again I am glad and heart happy. I want to get back and bind up Nebeeha's sore finger and kiss away the tears when it hurts too much, and sit down on the floor with wee Zehra and build a great city for her out of her blocks, wherein shall enter nothing to hurt or make her afraid. I must hurry, hurry, and get at my task. They will all be grown up before I know it, those children of mine.

Said Luqman the Sage: Let thy first attainment be the getting of a good friend. For a good friend is like unto a palm tree. It giveth thee shade when thou sittest, wood when thou gatherest and fruit delicious for thy food.—Arab Proverb.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Saturday Afternoon.

You have asked in several of your letters about Beyrout, what it is like, and if I never go there because no mention of it is in my letters. It is not that I have not been there, nor that it is not interesting, but it is so modern in many ways, and I have tried to tell you about things opposite of new. Still, I suppose there is not a little of interest in it, as is the case in all large cities.

Before coming to live here, I had not been in Beyrout excepting when Betty and I ran down in the car once or twice for shopping. We only spent one night there, and that at that very good Hotel where I had breakfast when I arrived from America. And that one night was occasioned by unfinished dentistry Betty had to wait over to have completed. So you see, I am not very competent to tell you much about it, although I go there frequently now, because I am near and all supplies must come from there.

But for picturesqueness and colour it cannot compare with Trablus, excepting in spots. Its situation is magnificent on St. George's Bay, which name

commemorates the spot where the dragon sported and St. George (*el Khudr,* the "Green One" to the Moslems), for ever ended his reign of terror. Curiously enough *el Khudr* is venerated alike by Christian and Moslem. The former name their churches and children for him, and the latter build shrines to his memory and therein consecrate their newly-born—a ceremony analogous to christening. There is a *Khudr* not far from my house in J.

If one arrives in Beyrout either by steamer or in the little baby Lebanon Tramway train, the terminus is the same, down by the water front. And one gets the impression of arriving in a metropolis. The cabbie, looking for a fare, races his horses beside the moving train, gesticulating to you at the car window, flashing a grateful smile when he gets your signal to wait at the station, if he arrives before the slowing train. And when the wheels cease to turn, you find yourself in a pandemonium indeed. Clamorous are the cabmen, insistent, the *sakis* clapping their brass bowls together to attract attention and crying *Ya atshan, ya atshan,* "Ho, thirsty one." The *ca'ak b'simsum* man not to be outdone, calls, *Ya sukhn, ya sukhn,* "Oh hot, oh hot," his wooden tray balanced on his head and his *koursee* hanging from his arm to place it on if you show the slightest desire to taste his delicious, crisp, crescent-shaped sesame seed-coated cakes, and you will very much desire so to do if you have once eaten any. These are cited as examples of noises.

Then swarms of porters, sweating, swearing, loud-voiced, clamorous and grabbing descend upon your bag, each one insisting you have always employed him, and threaten to dismember it in the struggle for possession. Once your carriage moves on with you, you begin to *feel* the colouring of the red *tarboushes* (fezes), blue trousers and white turbans of the slow-moving throngs in the roadways, or on the seemingly endless hotel balconies facing the sea. Occasionally it is a pink or red house which catches your eye, but generally bright, vivid blue predominates. You pass a large Austrian wholesale house, wherein one may purchase almost anything from Manchester muslins and French *bric à brac* to American Go On Shoes.

Next we notice the Banks, Salonika, Deutscher Palestina, and Imperial Ottoman, and the various Post Offices of the European Powers. Your carriage dodges the Belgian tram line as it passes the shop of the British and Foreign Bible Society to turn a sharp corner, but not before you obtain a glimpse of French Modistes, bon bon and cleaning establishments. Down a street lined with workers in wood your driver takes you, past a café or two, coming up against our old friends Thos. Cook & Sons, just as you turn up a bit of steep street and stop before the Hotel. Here you traverse a long veranda with tables and chairs suggestive of out-of-doors dining, then through a marble-paved entrance hall and up the steepest stairs you ever essayed, to

a cool, clean room wherein is rest and quiet. This is going to Beyrout and getting there as well.

There is much of interest in this big town fast becoming Europeanized, where are men and women a-plenty who wear fashionable clothing. There are splendid houses—one or two might be termed palaces, surrounded by high, protecting walls which conceal gardens of rare beauty, as a glimpse through an open gateway reveals. The great American College is the most conspicuous group of buildings in the Levant, and made my heart swell with pride the first time I stood on the campus and saw nearly a thousand students pass into the Chapel, with its rose windows, pipe organ and Georgia pine flooring. The faculty in cap and gown on the rostrum, the hymns, scriptures and prayers in English, might have caused me to think I was in America, had I been able to forget that the students wore *tarbushes* on their head, which neither place nor prayer sufficed to remove. It was not irreverence which kept them at the proper angle on the rows and rows of dark heads before me, but custom, which is all supreme out here.

If I were a student in that institution, I think I would almost worship the people who made it possible for me to get a college education in the arts and sciences, or medicine, or pharmacy, or dentistry, or commerce, or education, or how to be a trained nurse, and all this through the medium of the English language.

Now you have had a glimpse of the college—it would take all of our time to really see it—there are some twenty-five buildings standing in a campus of fifty acres; we will go on down the splendid wide boulevard leading past the lighthouse to the sea, following the shore to a waiting rowboat in which we will explore the Pigeon Islands, two tall pinnacles of rock, with crimson caps of wild flowers in the winter and spring, passing through mysterious entrances in their hearts of stone, through corridors and tunnels and in and out of caves and water-eaten passages.

Under, a long way under the shore of the mainland there is a cave, into which the storm-whipped sea sends thundrous billows, mighty and terrible, which eat in farther and farther, making in calm weather a sure covert for contraband traffic after nightfall when many a *kantar* of salt and tobacco and cases of firearms change hands, and are spirited away before the dawn.

Going back we will drive along the north shore, we have been out to the west and south, and when we reach the heart of the old city, we will leave the carriage to walk through the winding bazaars where diminutive *dikakeen* are filled with merchandise from every corner of the globe, Singer Sewing Machines and Milwaukee beer included!

The foreign community, too, is large and attractive, absorbing too much time, I always feel if one is engaged in serious work. There are wonderful

compatriots of ours at work there—men and women of fine culture and attainments. Just the same kind as those marvels in Trablus. I enjoy meeting them and knowing them, and am amazed at all they are accomplishing, and sometimes feel faintly envious because they have concerts and afternoon teas and lectures and meet the great ones of earth passing that way,—but I am always glad to get back to my niche, where are motherless little children who are mine, and my opportunity.

Days and as in this case weeks go by without an entry in this book of my Syrian life. I imagined that after my first year here I would have more leisure, but the more I know of the language, the more do I find to do. Sometimes I am so tired at night, that I can only slip between the sheets, telling my Father in heaven that He knows all about it, and that I must sleep or die. Your calendar tells you that the spring time has come and gone and that summer is here, my third summer away from you. I ought to be planning to come home, but what about these children and Kate's confidence in her friend? I must wait and watch for the turn in the road which will lead back to you, darling mother. Don't pity me, please, and say about me, "Poor Rachel." I am richer than any thing in the love of my children, and the opportunities for helping them I am utterly unable to take advantage of, because there are not enough hours in the days. No, I am happy,

happier than I have ever been. Perhaps I have found my real life place. Do you suppose I have? And if I have, when are you coming to share it with me? I want you so "hard" as Caryl says.

One Day.

I have been feeling that this particular portion of the globe is older than the rest, especially than America. It may be because the story of the beginnings of the human race has been staged in Genesis and on Babylonian tablets. Sometimes I imagine those prehistoric fragments of pottery of Kate's and C. D.'s are whole again in the hands of those first men and women who lived and played their parts in the great race drama, only to have the curtain rung down, that the stage be set for their successors. Once last winter, when we had a terrifying thunderstorm, I wondered if those first folk would not have been seeking some cave, perhaps the very one I sometimes go to out by the sea, to hide in, afraid as I was when the crashes of thunder seemed to split the sky. That day it did seem as though it were the voice of the Most High, especially when one awful crash came, throwing Miss Dear violently across the room. She was not harmed, other than being terribly frightened and upset. But our neighbour's house, Mejd ed Din Effendeh's, was struck, the bolt tearing an irregular jagged hole clear down one side of the tile roof.

I sent right over to offer assistance, but found no

one at home. That evening the Effendeh appeared at our mid-week service, and asked that public thanks be given to Allah that no one of his family was harmed. He is a Mohammedan.

A Fresh Entry.

I know something new, mother dear. I know what a "fatted calf" is, only it is not a calf, but a sheep nowadays, hand reared from a little lamb, and made quite a member of the family. Each day it is given a bath, many times a day all it can eat of wayside gleamings and mulberry leaves, until the autumn when the stuffing process begins.

A woman will sit beside the creature on the *mustaby,* "door place," morning, noon and night, and stuff leaves and herbage into its mouth, holding the jaws somehow and assisting it to work them if necessary. Sometimes these sheep get so fat, it does not seem possible for them to walk. And I have told you of their broad, fat tails? great excrescences where the tail should be, of nothing but pure fat, which is greatly prized in cooking.

July 29th.

This day has an entry duly dated, for reasons which will be disclosed as you read. I received a letter yesterday. Will you listen to it and to my tale of what came after?

Rachel:

I find in the record I keep of daily events, that it is just two years to-morrow since you were taken from this office down here by the sea (I am writing now at your desk), and placed in charge of a work not of your choosing. Dare we say, God was not in it? I am asking myself that question, for the fact remains that He seems to have taken you for this long time quite beyond my ken, quite out of reach. And I had wanted you closer, not farther away. *Had* did I say? That is not true, is it?

I know there is a very slight bond, Miss Morgan's request that I be one of your advisers, when I desired to serve you in a more intimate capacity for the rest of your life. Notwithstanding the official relationship, I have not been able to see you often; there is a Syrian Mrs. Grundy to be taken into consideration, and I have not known whether had there been no conventions to be observed, you would have cared to have me come.

And now my work here is finished, and I am facing the west again. I have not found the bi-lingual inscription. Failure is it? At any rate the search is to be suspended for the present. But over there in England is the old home. I was the eldest son. The others are all gone. The old Manor House stands amid

its lawns and trees and smiling gardens. My ancestors lived there and the churchyard records where they lie. In this eastern land, barren and thirsty, I have remembered with great longing at times, those green fields and leafy woods, beautiful and beneficent, when my soul even seemed parched and dry. And there is an abundance in storehouse and Bank.

And yet I am not content. I want just one other thing. Can you imagine what? Have you ever looked at or tried to see my point of view? You said you "did not feel a particle of love" for me then. And you have had too much to think about and learn since that unforgettable day, for me to intrude my affairs upon you that I might try and induce you to change your mind. My desires had to be put one side temporarily, but not forever. I assure you, although I have been impatient, my heart has not fainted from defeat. I startled you that day. Perhaps I was too abrupt, and looked only at my side and my great love for you.

I would like to see you before I go,—the steamer sails on Monday, and this is Wednesday. Have I your permission to come and say good-bye? Be kind, and fix the time. The messenger who takes this to you will wait for an answer.

Yours,

J. D. Whitelaw.

This is the letter I got by special messenger yesterday. I was in the midst of reading it when a telegram was brought me from C. D. that read, "Going to Europe Monday. Betty also; am sending the car for you to come; arrange to go with us, David."

Well! Two such communications were breath stoppers and I gasped and wept alternately. The bottom of things seemed falling out. There wasn't time for preparation, for it was not long ere Deebna was stopping before the gate. But I *took* time to write a note. "Will it do just as well to say good-bye in Trablus as here? I am coming, and when you read this I'll be there."

I did not sign my name for he would know who wrote it. And instead of that messenger plodding back over the short cuts, walking all the long, weary way, a matter of at least twenty-five miles, we took him in the car, instructed to deliver that note the first thing.

I am up in my old room at Betty's as I write, trying to set things in orderly array in my mind. David had a cable calling him to a conference in London, and he thought Betty had better go along for a change. And he wants me to go with them. Ah, England again, with the greenness, one's own kind once more and the blessed English language spoken by every one who calls and passes you on the streets! Oh, how good it would be. *And* new hats and up-to-date gowns!

But I am not going, mother dear. The summer vacation is on and Miss Dear, who sadly needed a good long rest, is away, and there is no one to stay with the children but myself. And besides, we are trying experiments with silk weaving. We induced a master weaver from Hamath to come and start our looms, and I am anxious to foster the work. Then, too, we are beginning to really teach gardening, and you should see the children's plots of growing things, now that we have an unlimited supply of water since you saw that we had the oil engine to irrigate with when the wind does not blow. I have offered a prize for the finest egg plant and peas, another for potted plants and cut flowers. The flower and vegetable show is to be held late in August, and I cannot desert that in which I have taken such pride and worked so hard to make a success.

So you see, I cannot get away, much as I would like to. C. D. and Betty will not be gone but a couple of months, and I am not worth much, if I cannot endure being left behind for that length of time.

It seems C. D. started off his telegram and the car to fetch me at about the same time. The former only beat the car by five minutes. I got here in time for tea with Betty, and before C. D. came from his office. Mr. Whitelaw being a Britisher, never misses tea, and when he strolled in, it was funny the expression on his face directly

he saw me. He had not yet received my reply to his note, and the surprise was complete. But his greeting left nothing to be desired, and that crinkly smile I like so much, came forward with the grasp of his hands. Yes, mother, he used both of them to held one of mine. And—well, he seemed glad I was there, and I'll confess to you he looked manly and good to my eyes. C. D. had not told him he had sent for me, any more than he had told C. D. of his letter to me. I wonder why?

I must get into bed, but I am thinking about the children, and if anyone has remembered that Temam needs looking after, or will that subtle little thing manage to slip into bed before she brushes her teeth? And wee Kefa had a bit of cold and needs a witch-hazel nose wash. Since we began using the latter with the children, we do not have well-developed colds. But, I have a battle royal sometimes to accomplish it, and only win out because I am bigger and stronger. But we conquer the cold, which is the main thing.

And now good-night. Why does Mr. W. desire to say a particular good-bye, can you tell me? I found to-night that he has very unruly eyes. I begged Betty to play for us, I was so music hungry, and that man off in a corner bothered me. I felt his eyes, and every time I looked his way, I caught a gleam and that hidden smile. We are going for a canter early in the morning before breakfast ere it gets too warm.

Friday, July 31st.

What do you suppose was the first thing I remembered when I wakened this morning? Not that I was here in Trablus and in my own room from whose windows are visions of glorified mountains and sea, nor that I was going for a canter on the sands with Mr. Whitelaw, but, of those children down home. Oh, mother, shall I confess it? It *is* home, and I do not like to think of the possibility of giving it over to some one else some day. And yet, I am not ready to say I am willing to be called a missionary. I am not good enough for that. I am only mothering some children who would be lonely and forsaken otherwise. I love to provide for them and have them taught, and watch them grow and develop, but more than all, to try and help them lay sure and right foundations for the future.

These first morning reflections did not prevent me from keen enjoyment in the saddle. I rode Betty's horse which has the appropriate name of Shaitaneh,—she devil—and she is one at times. This morning she would hardly wait to be off, and was with difficulty induced to stand long enough for me to mount, and then away she shot like a bird awing. She is under perfect control, but simply flies when in the mood I found her to-day. I could hear the pound, pound of Mr. Whitelaw's mount behind me at first, and when Shaitaneh had winded herself a bit, I wheeled about and rode back

to find my escort. And I could not find any. A funny thing to lose an escort. He did not materialize. I reined in and waited for him to appear. Finally when he did not come, I went back to the parting of the ways. I should explain, that these devious paths to the sea wind between gardens separated from the road and each other by high hedges. Hence, if you go the length of your horse down one of them, you are quite lost to sight. I soon sighted Mr. Whitelaw coming around a bend in the upper road at a quick canter and knew he saw me by the wave of his crop. Then I wheeled about and was off again the way I had come, Shaitaneh making the dust fly as she tore along. After a bit, I saw her prick up her ears and give a welcoming whinny, and there coming toward me was my escort, who had found a cross path and thus won out in the hide and seek game.

"Fine, wasn't it?" he called.

"Splendid, only you found me too quickly," I answered. "I'll not let you the next time."

"Perhaps," laying his hand on Shaitaneh's neck to quiet her as we rode side by side. "Only you couldn't lose yourself to me, you know," said with much assurance I thought.

"And why not?" I asked simply to mark time, and fend off another remark.

"I don't intend to let you," was the answer this quiet man made who had kept still, and had never

by so much as a word or look, referred to the question he asked me once, and I had come to feel, perhaps, that he had accepted as final, my rejection of his startling proposal to teach me the primer of love.

We rode along in silence for a time, and after an exhilarating race on the hard firm sands, we drew rein beside some towering rocks, lashed and beaten by the never quiet waves.

Mr. Whitelaw secured his horse and then came to me.

"Won't you rest here a little? The horses need a breathing spell," holding out his hand to assist me to dismount.

Oh, I knew what was coming, but somehow I did not want to run away. Does it seem as strange to you as it does to me, mother, that I meekly let that man lift me from my saddle and finding a seat for me in the shadow of a great rock, there to pour out the flood of love and devotion he had kept dammed up for so long? That first declaration, was a tiny, trickling rill compared with the torrent which carried away every possible objection I could conjure up or invent, even sweeping away the moorings almost to my work.

I may not tell you what he said dearest, nor what my answer was, only that he penetrated somehow to a certain hidden place in my heart of hearts and found therein a carefully guarded secret, hardly known to myself, that I did care.

"Only *care,* Rachel? Can't you find that other word there?"

"Like," I corrected. Still he was not satisfied until, well—I whispered it from somewhere in the shelter of his coat in the midst of a long, smothering, heavenly something, wherein the old world spun away, and we two were the only units in the whole universe of God. *Unit,* not units.

Have I not used restraint to tell you all this wonderful tale in the orderly way you like? Only one thing more can I tell you to-night. Betty was too busy packing to dress for tea this afternoon, and when I came down to pour for Mr. Whitelaw and myself, he was waiting, and I got the kind of greeting I hope he will keep up the rest of our lives. And I got something else too.

When he was last in England he had his mother's ring reset, anticipatory to to-day, he was so sure about the final outcome, and as he slipped it on my finger said:

"Beloved, my father pledged my mother with these jewels (pearls and diamonds, oh, so lovely), and I, too, pledge you with the same, my true and faithful love and service as long as we both do live." Then kneeling on one knee he kissed the token and the hand it was on, as though he were a knight of olden time and I a princess.

Wait till to-morrow, dearest mother. It is too much for one day. If I could have had your arms to fly to from his. Denny—not John nor Jack even

is his intimate name, but just Denny, his mother's name for him and which he has given to me,—Denny sent a cable this morning to you. Are you reading it now? And what are you saying and thinking? I—happiness enfolds me, oh mother, mother. I did not know this kind existed. The story writers don't know how to describe it. They have not even touched the fringes of it. Why did not you tell me mother darling, what is was like?

Home Again.

Mother dearest, I mean to write something for you every day, now, but there is so much to arrange when one's whole life plan has to be changed and made to fit in with another, that there seems to be no time for anything or anybody but this man whom in a rash moment I promised to marry.

I told him the morning before he went away, that I could not marry him.

"Yes? And why?" He did not seem at all disturbed by my pronouncement, but continued to smile at me and look adorable.

"Really, I mean it—if you are going to take me away from those children down home. I just couldn't go. It would break my heart to bits to lose them," I told him.

"How about losing me? Would that trouble you any?"

"Some," I admitted after sufficient urging.

"Only some? Not a great deal?"

I had to admit—he is a very persistent person—that it would hurt a million times more if he should slip out of sight, which admission seemed to ease his mind somewhat. Then he proposed that we have a last ride together, and there by our great, overshadowing rock by the sea, we talked of many things and decided some. This much is final however we may change other plans. The work Kate placed in my hands is not to be relinquished. And not because I hold this work in trust for my dead friend only. It has become *my* task, which not even this great wonderful love and companionship may take out of my hands. Then, too, there is much of interest for an archæologist in J. and Denny has long wanted to prowl around and see what the prospects are for regular excavations by his society at home. Thank God I do not have to choose between work and him.

So that much is easy. We will try to secure a strong force of helpers that we may be free to come and go. I had about decided to build a house on the higher ground back of the Orphanage, for my own habitation, or whoever might be in charge before Mr. W. stepped in to disarrange things, and you know about the plans Matthews and Black sent out for it. We shall still carry out that one plan and have our own house, to be built after Denny is here permanently to relieve me of looking after its erection. I find he has heaps of gold and houses and lands and is an archæologist be-

cause he loves it, and not because he has to dig to live.

Have you ever discovered that I am queer? I have had suspicions that such was the case, and now I know it. And the evidence of it is that while I hated to have my man go to England so soon, I welcomed the opportunity to be alone with my joy, that I might get my inner self in order, and accustomed to this great absorbing thing we call love. Almost every mail brings some word from him. He arrived at the Manor House two weeks ago. Perhaps I'll let you see a letter I got to-day, in which he says he has written you suggesting that you go over and join him there and let him escort you the rest of the way to Syria. A very good arrangement it seems to me, and I hope you will do so. How will it seem to you to have a son, as well as a daughter? And such a son! C. D. and Betty are enjoying every minute in London. Betty writes they have been down and seen Mr. Whitelaw, in fact, he insisted they make the Manor House their home while in England. Betty says it is a place of great charm, and that she envies me the privilege of having it for my home some day.

Here is the letter I hinted I might show you. It is not the regulation love epistle as you will see, but somehow it tells me in every word of the love and devotion of the Dearest Man.

My Rachel:

I wish you could see it, this greenness and freshness stretching all around,—lawns and meadows, woods and gardens and country quiet and peace. There are no silent-footed camels nor laden mules passing, each pace marked by the jangle of bells. There is no glare of unclouded sun on grey, dusty rocks and parched wayside fig or mulberry trees. It is all restful to eye and soul, and I would that I could have you here to bask in it with me and get the refreshment you need.

It would be perfect to-day out under the limes, where I could watch you over your tea-cups once more. For they are yours because mine. There is a particular winged chair, with a high, fan-shaped back, which was my mother's, in which you are to sit and preside, while I read aloud to you after the tea is over. Your hands will be busy. Do you knit? I hope you do, for there is nothing quite so fitting for graceful, white hands like yours, as shining needles, fashioning some pretty thing. Oh yes, I do remember how you used to sit on the other side of the table from me those evenings in Trablus, before you went to J. and when David was convalescing, knitting, while we delved into those well-stocked book shelves of his.

And how long is it to be before I bring you to

my home to make it yours also? For no matter how much time we spend in J. the Manor House will always remain open to receive us when we tire of wandering. And I have a presentiment that that will be very often, don't you?

Oh, my Rachel, I suppose it is true, this great happiness, but somehow I find it difficult to make it real after all. Don't you think you were a trifle cruel? And two whole years never by so much as a look did you hint that you did "care,—like." Think of the arrears you will have to pay. And have you enough in the Bank of Love saved up to quite clear yourself? I warn you, you will need a large amount, and of a particular coinage. Begin to pay in your next letter, will you? Remember how far you are from me, and that I want you, want you, everlastingly want you with me, always near as long as life shall last.

I am coming soon to fetch you. I have written your mother asking her to join me here and we will come on together. Then she can stay with your children, while you and I take a journey together. Nay, my beloved one, *begin* that journey together on the Long Road, which please God, shall have no turning to the end of Eternity.

He who signs this is all yours,

Denny.

Patience is the key to joy.—Arab Proverb.

CHAPTER NINE

I am finding it difficult to adjust present conditions to that inner serenity upon which my heart happiness must rest. And just as you used to let me pour into your understanding ears my childish perplexities, so I come now to sit at your feet while the difficulties come out one by one for solution.

Kate placed a great responsibility in very ignorant hands when she died, not only am I untrained, but untested. I have begun to see the enormity of the task I have undertaken, and although somewhat incredulous still as to the desirability of presenting new ideas colder and cruder to a people mellowed and ripened in so many ways, by an age-long outlook upon great mountains, vast plains and this boundless sea, I have been forced to see that the Sons of Shem stand in need of the hustling ways of the Children of Japheth.

I see also that I have received much. Why, mother, my *background* of educated ancestors is an asset I had never counted in until I came out here and found that very few know how old they are, and that "how to open a book" is not a universal possession by any means. I never knew

before what it meant to have been born in a land of free speech in the press and on the platform. I did not realize there *could* be a sharp limit to ways by which a woman might earn her living. Fancy an American woman thrown upon her own resources finding herself obliged to scrub or wash or sew *only*. Oh yes, I know our women once were shut up to about the same limited area of occupations, but that day has passed long ago. The West has moved on, while progress has not yet started here so far as the government is concerned. The women who have been fortunate enough to have had an education of sufficient breadth, may be employed as teachers, if their families do not object, which they are apt to do if they are of the *akabir* "aristocracy."

The reason why this country has never risen from its age-long desuetude is, there is no foundation upon which to build a credible superstructure for society. The western nations have become great and civilized, because they have grown and expanded by being mutually helpful each to the other, I mean as regards literature, inventions, science, etc. Here colossal ignorance on the part of the official class, prates and preens itself at the expense of the development of the empire.

Here are some examples of the repressive measures which obtain here. Telephones are little known, because some one supposed they and dynamite meant the same destructive energy. A text

book on chemistry was suppressed because it contained on every page H_2O, which the imperial censor interpreted to mean "Abd ul Hamid II is nothing." One wonders if he ever heard that the Arabs were the first chemists. We get our word chemistry from the Arabic alchemy. These are two illustrations among many I have heard of the crass ignorance in officialdom.

I have also learned that the people have splendid qualities. That their capabilities are quite as fine as any western's, and I have begun to ask myself, by what right are they to be denied the same opportunity to develop as is the happy lot of every one who bears the proud name American?

If the government only provided an educational system, and employed modern methods in governing: if the industries were encouraged and developed, there might be hope that things would right themselves. But when the reverse is appallingly true, where is light to come from, if some one from outside does not appear bearing the "torch of civilization"?

I instinctively have had an antipathy to the word "missionary." But since learning a little of the marvellous Arabic language, I have discovered that in the speech of the people a missionary is really "one who is sent," a *moursel.* That idea has illumined this missionary business. I was not "sent" into my work. I was *thrust* into it. What must one do to be a "sent one," I wonder? All of

them out here, the *moursaleen,* belong to Boards and Societies. I with Kate's inheritance, and my patrimony am free to work out my own ideas and hers. Kate pre-empted this little untilled corner, and left it well cultivated.

Mother, is there anything more important I could do with my life, than to take these bequeathed children, bereft of their natural mothers and of Kate,—twice bereaved—and give them the best chance I know how? To so fit them for life that I can hand them the "torch of civilization" along with the knowledge of the "Light of Life," reasonably sure it will be passed on in turn to others? Mother of me, I need your help. I need my mother in the midst of these great questions.

My next perplexity is,—and darling, I am turning my heart inside out for you. I've got to, it aches so. What shall I do about Denny? Is his coming into my life going make me any little bit less eager to do this thing I have undertaken? Am I going to be able to do it at all? I puzzle and question and banish sleep from my pillow as I strive to solve the riddle. Is there such a thing as a double harness elastic enough for us to pull together in, when over in England estates and family ties and traditions draw in that direction, while here, and all important, is a great need, and wide opportunities wholly dependent on me? As for Denny's coming here as an adjunct merely, the thought is abhorrent. Our engagement was so sud-

den, and the bliss of the few days before he went away so pure and blessed, that we only saw the one great, luminous, primal fact, our mutual love. There was no time for adjustment. But I know, oh, I *know*, I want to keep this very precious thing, the love of my man Denny, while I fear lest we allow our service to become diluted, when it should become intensified. I want our marriage to be not merely a beautiful, selfish incident in our lives, but a step to a higher plane of service. Will the desire for growth dwindle if love thrives? Tell me, mother, you know. I wrote something of this to Denny a fortnight ago. Of one thing I am sure, he will not misunderstand my questions.

Mother, he told me during those heart happiness days,—less than three they were,—that he had watched me grow during the time he has known me,—the spiritual me, and he reproached me, but very gently, for saying I was not good enough for this work, nor to be his wife. Could I, oh could I give up "all for His dear sake," if it meant giving up him? Would it mean, having real spiritual stature, surrendering my own dear himself? It is all a muddle and I need your wise advice.

The End of a Busy Day.

The days come and go, and I may not wait inactive for the untangling of the knots in my life skein, but must keep about the business of healing the wee ones' hurts, teaching them how to sew a

seam, and dust a room and be sorry for wrong doing and faithful in the performance of their little tasks.

To-day little Bedr (Full Moon) was naughty and gave wee Zehra (Flower) a wicked push which sent her headlong on some sharp stones and *fedaghit rasha* "cut her head." My! how the blood ran, and poor frightened, repentent Bedr followed, sobbing up her little Calvary, marking the drops of blood all the way. She took refuge at my side, holding on to my skirts and asking, "Will she die? Have I slain her? I pray thee, I pray thee." Poor little motherless baby, just five the other day. After the wound had been washed, I found it was very small and really of no account. Then I took them both to my sitting-room and we talked it over. Bedr could hardly wait to say *Betreedy tsamaheeny?* "Wilt thou forgive me?" And the little flower child, consoled with a cookie, coldly said, "Aye, aye," and went on making scallops around the edge of her sweetie with her little white teeth. The incident was closed so far as she was concerned. But sorry Bedr had not shown enough contrition, and running to her shelf in the closet, brought her dearest possession, a large pink glass bead she had strung on a bit of string, and insisted that Zehra wear it around her neck.

"And against another time," I asked. "How about hands which push? What shall we do with them?" She looked solemnly at me with her great

black eyes, then coming slowly forward, whispered with a catch in her breath, "Tie them fast, my teacher."

"Very well," I said, and bade her bring a handkerchief, and all the rest of the morning she sat as still as a mouse on a little chair, her arms folded and tied together.

In the afternoon Um Ali came—a good three hours' walk—for me to look at her eye, on which a ripe pear had fallen as she was looking up into the tree. I could see nothing wrong, but she cannot distinguish objects with it, and I shall have to send her to some one in Beyrout who knows about eyes.

While I was busy with her, a company of Moslem ladies called and I entertained them with the Victrola. *Subhan el Khalik, Ma ashterkum entum el Amerikan,* "Praise to the Creator, How clever are you Americans," were some of the comments. Then we had tea and some of Ferrud's cake. While they were here the *Adan* for the *Aser* (the middle of the afternoon) was heard, and they asked me for a drink of water and if they might say their prayers. The water brought, they rinsed their mouths and standing and kneeling, prayed with their faces toward Mecca. I am glad they have enough confidence in me to approach their God in the only way they know, even in my presence. Mother, did you ever hear of anyone in America,

out making calls, asking permission to kneel down and pray, and thus keep a tryst with our God?

A Glad Day.

To-night I come to you darling mother, too excited to sleep. If I could only share my brimming cup with you. First, your cable is here, "Sailing to-day." Oh, I'll believe it is true when I see you on the steamer deck in Beyrout harbour. Still, I know you are actually on the ocean this very minute, every whirl of the screw bringing you by so much nearer. And when you are here, are you going to experience the pull of privilege too, and be content and happy, loving and blessing your adopted grandchildren? You are going to be just that, if I know my own mother.

Oh, but I have not told you the great, splendid piece of news. Why do things of deep joy come as surprises? As I sat on the balcony alone, each weenty one in bed, I heard the gate-bell, and Ferrud's kobkobs clattering on the stairs down to the first landing that she might peep from the window, and her rush through the hall and out to me breathless with the importance of news, *Fee wahid burra,* "Some one is outside." Some one indeed! As she bustled away to prepare sherbat, I heard, "Am I welcome?" and there stood the Dearest Man. Ah, how welcome, as he was soon assured, although there crept through my heart a fear, somehow. "Why? Why?" I enquired as soon as I

could—I was prevented from breathing freely for a few minutes, let alone speaking.

"Why?" he answered at last. "Why? your questions must be answered, and those fears dismissed, my Rachel. Could I let you go through this time of testing and decision alone when only a matter of less than a week lay between us? Together we can thresh it out, but apart—who knows? You,—would you have built a barrier to keep me perpetually outside? Some of your statements were rather startling, you know." Oh, I did know, and I feared still more he seemed so grave. But we agreed that we would not discuss anything until to-morrow. So I put my fears one side for overnight, and we sat under the Syrian stars and spoke of other things, happy to be together again.

His eyes with that special smile he reserves for me, were confident but serious, somehow, and with a new gleam. But for to-night, he was here, and not far away.

As he was starting for the Hotel where he had secured lodgings, I asked, "How long can you stay?" and he seemed to think I alone could answer my own question.

"No, oh no, I can't," I exclaimed, and before I knew what was happening, a great, tearing sob stopped further speech.

"Rachel, child," and his tones were very tender, "has it been so hard? It is well I came. Wait and trust a little. Can't you find any confidence on

which to rest? We will find a way to-morrow," he comforted as he kissed away the tears. He would not leave me until he was quite satisfied about my unhappiness. Then he sent me off to bed, letting himself out of the house. I listened to each foot-fall going up the road. But I am somehow, greatly afraid of to-morrow.

The Next Night, after the Day of Days.

My pen cannot move fast enough to tell you about The Day, but I have put on the curb bit and will begin at the beginning. After breakfast yesterday, I packed a basket of lunch and we took C. D.'s car and went to that enchanting spot over the sea, where Denny first offered to teach me to spell out a certain primer, and there undisturbed and in quiet we had it out. Deebna took the car on to Trablus for some slight repairs, coming back in time to take us home for tea.

When Denny had seen that I was comfortably seated he began without any preamble, "Now, Rachel, let us face it squarely and see where we stand." Then he asked, "Can you put aside for the time being everything," and he hesitated an instant before he added, "even our love?" gravely said.

I smiled up at him, but could not answer. Again he asked, "Tell me, is there no way to arrange for this work to be carried on without your constant presence?" I told him we could probably find some one much better fitted than I to carry it on, but I

hoped she would not materialize. "Why?" he next probed, and waited gravely and silently for my answer, which tarried. The testing had come.

"Denny," I said slowly, "when you first knew me, I was not worth a second thought. I was undeveloped and ignorant and without a particle of real religion in my makeup. I was arrogant and stupid and foolish. It was considered smart in my college set to say religion was old fashioned. Oh, yes, I was an Episcopalian, but not a Christian.

"But somehow, I 'caught the gleam' of something I did not comprehend, from those saintly missionaries I came in contact with, and I set myself the task of searching for its source. And I found it. It comes from the heart of the Man who died because He so loved. My great discovery was that He died for me as though I were the only sinner on earth. Don't you see why I must be here? It is the least I can do for Him, it seems to me. I find Kate's dying confidence and trust hard to set aside, and I had just promised my Lord, I would do the best I could if He would help me for the rest of my life right here, when you came along, and it was so blessed to belong to you that for those three days while we were in Paradise, I made myself believe I could be all things to this work and you could go on being an archæologist and an English gentleman with your estates, and all would be well. But it won't work, and what shall we do?"

"No, Rachel, it won't work. I see that, too. You

have gone to the root of the matter. There is but one working basis, one dynamic for us both. The only power great enough and enduring and strong enough to remove this mountain between us and happiness, is love. Love for Him who is the source of all love, love for each other and love for this people. You said in your letter you could not bear the thought of your husband being merely an appendage to your work, which we had agreed must not be given up."

He had been standing, leaning against a rock while listening to me, but now he came and grasping my hands drew me into his arms. "Rachel, Rachel," and his voice shook with deep emotion, "not as an adjunct, but couldn't I help? Perhaps, I might become a 'sent one' in time, too. The double harness can be made to fit and not gall. Shall it be share and share alike?"

And then he told me how they had wanted him to go on with the excavations up country, but he declined, "because," he said, "I want to try helping fit men into their places in the Kingdom of Heaven, instead of spending my days putting pieces of pottery together in an attempt to spell out the prehistoric past. I can still do that as a pastime, but no longer as a major pursuit. You see, dearest, I too have learned lessons in this land. The Man of Nazareth is become a new Friend as I have come to know His fellow-countrymen and their needs and possibilities." Oh mother, how my heart

sang its loudest joy song as I listened to a lot more than I could tell you, knowing that there was not to be any sacrifice, but more and more love in a life together, with him.

When we were going home I said, "After all we have settled it along the line of least resistance. The story writers would have made me pious and proud spiritually, so that I would have refused to see any way but the hardest,—renunciation of you and all joy of living."

"Rachel," he rejoined, "we are real people, living in a world of work and need. Not every one is able to choose his field of labour, and not every one elects the corners where the results make no great showing. You are not a story-book character, but my——" I'll not say what, for it was for my ears alone—and his hand found mine (Deebna could not see) "and besides you are strong enough to hold fast to your ideals."

We were spinning along towards home in that contentment, which I fancy comes not many times in one's life, when ahead of us by the roadside under the shelter of a wayside olive tree, we observed a knot of people gathered round something on the ground.

Deebna stopped beside them, and we witnessed the saddest sight. A young wife and mother was just breathing her last when we drew up alongside. I sprang from the car, for I recognized them as people I had seen in J. The young husband was

holding his two-months-old son in his arms in a frenzy of grief, calling upon the inanimate form before him to speak to him, to look at her first born, and then with streaming eyes, turned to me and begged me to do something. I kneeled beside him and gathered the motherless babe to my heart and tried to find out what had happened. It seems the wife had never been strong since the boy came, and that day besought her husband to take her to her village. She was weak, but insisted that the change would benefit her, so they started and had only gone an hour's journey when she cried out in great pain and begged to be allowed to lie down. They spread the carriage cushions under the friendly tree, and there with the sunlight glinting through the silver grey leaves she left her husband and little sleeping lad forever.

Denny took command of the situation with such tenderness and wisdom. Deebna was sent after a coffin, the driver of the carriage to bring a doctor to certify as to the cause of death for the government, and then he drew the husband, bereft and nearly frantic away from that quiet form under the carriage robe, and learned about his circumstances, his business and especially that there was no near relative in a position to care for the baby. Denny asked the baby's name and was told it was *Hanna,* "John." "That's my name," he told the father. "I shall have to see that my namesake is properly cared for until he is old enough to care

for himself," which fact will be a comfort when the poor man is quiet enough to think clearly.

The plain coffin was soon there, and the pathetic procession started, the wife in the same carriage in which she left home a few hours before, the grief-stricken man with us in the car, and the motherless little one cradled in my arms. There are many details of our arrival, of the arrangements for the funeral which was held early this morning, for according to Turkish law the dead must be buried within twenty-four hours, which I cannot put on paper. I know, the shining coins I saw slipped into Abu Hanna's hand as Denny parted with him, have eased the material expense of this unexpected sorrow.

All last night I heard the death wail in the one-roomed cottage by the sea. Sympathy is quick-winged and sorrow sacred in this land of loving hearts. Cooked food in quantity was carried to the house of mourning, none lacked as they watched by the side of the solitary mourner, who never left the dead until she was carried to her last resting place. Little Hanna slept last night in a hastily constructed bassinet,—a clothes-basket lined with pillows, on a chair beside my bed.

A strange ending for my great joy day, was it not? But sorrow is ever tagging on the heels of happiness. "Our first service together, my Rachel," the Dearest Man said, as we stood on the balcony

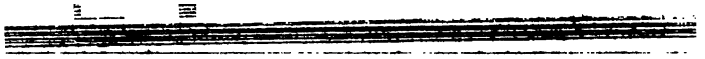
facing the orange and pomegranate garden after our belated supper.

The shadows deepened and darkened, blurring the trees as twilight was swallowed up of night. Across the nearby sea, the lights of the distant city came out one by one. The Little Sister of the Moon (Venus), glowing and resplendent in the western sky, threw a path of glory on the water as though it were a gleaming highway over which we might pass to those other lands far below the horizon which gave us birth. But even as we watched, the eastern horizon became slowly distinct, and presently the full moon edged itself above the rim of the mountains, so that the lesser light paled and withdrew.

We watched the transformation of the dark Lebanon as the great orb asserted its sway, noted how the shadows crept away from my garden, until each tree stood out leafy and symmetrical in silence and beauty, and knew we were witnessing as in a pantomime staged by nature for us two alone, a symbolism of our future and work. Not to the west, not back home along a golden pathway must we walk, but right here where the light was flooding the place of my choosing and his, whose presence beside me had already glorified life.

My heart's beloved came with morning's faintest light.
I cried, 'Oh sit thee here and rest beside thy love
Oh heart of mine. I'll hold the cup for thee to quaff.
Didst thou not fear the lurking dangers of the night?'
He answer made, 'I know no fear, for love of thee
Hath spoilèd me of both my spirit and my soul.'

—An Ancient Arabic Kasîdeh.



CHAPTER TEN

Mother dearest, you are drawing nearer and nearer every minute, and soon I shall be telling you all the things I have not written during these three years we have been separated.

Miss Dear came back to-day, and is such intelligent comfort and help. Denny telegraphed her the day after The Day of Days. "The beginning of days and months and years please God, my Rachel," he said, adding "and why have any break in the beautiful continuity?" with an enquiring smile.

I reflected that this is the land in which the Church of Christ was once symbolized as "A bride adorned for her husband," and made answer, "You always say things. But I am not ready. It is three years since I have had a new frock, and this bride is not going to her bridegroom except with the attire due him."

That adorable smile rewarded me for the pretty conceit, and something else too, which held my lips fast shut for ever so long. Then, "Rachel, your adorning is not in fine apparel of latest mode, but in the love of your heart and that new outlook on life which shines in your grey eyes. The fact is,

you would be adorned if your wedding garment were but one of those white frocks I notice you always wear mornings. Child, what do we care how you are gowned. Our faces are set toward new horizons, not fashions."

"But Denny," I persisted, "don't you really care how I dress?" and as I said it, I realized how slight my knowledge was of the man.

"I care much," he smiled back at me. "So much that I always know what you have on, and that it seems fitting to the occasion. One gown I especially like to see you in, is that wine-coloured one you wore on The Day." I made a mental vow then and there, that I would always gratify myself and him, by having a red taffeta frock in my wardrobe.

I told him I was pleased he liked my clothes, but insisted that I did not have a thing I would wish to be married in. His next remark was fairly breath-stopping.

"My Rachel, when *is* the wedding to take place? That has not been decided, has it?" The answer tarried. "After mother gets here," I finally said. "Won't that be time enough to decide?"

"We must decide some things before that," he said, and we talked a long hour walking up and down under the grape arbour, which is so huge that five great vines are needed to cover it. Near by the tall eucalyptus tree kept shaking out spicy smells as the breeze rippled its long-hanging foliage, and

the birds poured a continual fusillade of melody from the tapering topmost boughs.

And this is the conclusion. He had many arguments against our being separated again, and I was persuaded of them at last, to assent to his proposition, that we be married some time during the week after mother arrives. Her steamer is due next Saturday week, and this is Monday. It looks to me as though there would be a wedding here very soon. Meanwhile Denny is to absent himself, for I shall never be able to accomplish anything if he is here. When I asked where he was going, he answered, "I have some exploring I would like to do." "More archæology?" I queried. "Of a certain sort," was his reply. And this is the reason why he is still here.

Beyrout. The Sea View Hotel.

How I have longed for and at the same time scorned the New York shops during this busy week. I am not sure but I have found things as dainty and sweet and fitting as I would have on Fifth Avenue. I decided that I would be sensible and not try to have a really new wardrobe. In the first place, there was no time for that, and secondly I have an idea mother is bringing me some things from home.

In the most fascinating of Oriental shops, I came upon yards and yards of heavy white silk—native weave and which will wash. That I selected for

the gown—a simple going-away dress with a long covering coat of the same material. To protect from the dust, I got a beautiful white and gold *burnus,* which is a thing of joy. Then a French milliner took a bit of the material and fashioned me a fetching motor cap, which I will cover with one of the long, white silk *terhas* many of the Syrian ladies wear instead of hats. I have despaired and nearly wept over the shoe question. I can find none to fit, and I wanted some white ones dreadfully. I have pumps I brought from America, but they have been shabby for two years, and have been chalked and chalked until the lining almost shows through in the worn places. Well, they will have to stand another coat, for who ever heard of a bride being married in anything but white shoes?

Later.

I was interrupted by the *garçon de chambre* bringing the finished result from the tailor, who was interested enough to put my frock right through with all speed, and he has done far better than I expected. It is plain, severely so, but quite suitable for the wedding robe of a "sent one." I do not intend to wear that motor cap during the ceremony, instead a straight-brimmed chapeau with a perky white feather, one of the scraggy kind, not so pretty, but very smart according to the fashion papers they showed me.

Not a word has come from that Dearest Man all

this week. He could not get a motor of course, but he secured a good pair of horses and started for the mountains the day I came down here in C. D.'s car. My shopping is all done, and I can scarcely believe that by this time to-morrow, I'll be home and that mother, my blessed mother, will be with me. If Denny were to be there too, it would be perfect. But he did not know when he would return.

Mother's Day.

I left word at Cook's that I was to be called for at 6 A. M., and when I came out to go to the steamer, there was the old boatman C. D. always has, waiting for me with Deebna, who looked very smart in a new *Sittik Rosa* suit, which being rendered into English means, that his suit was made from pongee, but for some reason is called "Your lady Rose."

The autumnal rain, the "early rain," is hovering along the crests of the Taurus Mountains away up north, while the nearer Lebanons are wreathed with mists and clouds much of the time. Occasionally we get omens of the coming "sound of rain" in the lightning which plays on the northern horizon in the evening. Thus it is that the sunsets and day dawnings have clouds a-plenty which they colour and glorify until I sometimes think heaven itself opens to give us a glimpse of the "eye hath not seen" wonders which await us up there.

This morning as I sat in the stern of the fluccia waiting for the steamer to get *pratique,* for until that was granted no one could go on board, there was presented to mother a marvellous welcome up in the sky and on the mountaintops. I could see her standing at the rail, and motioned to her to look toward the sunrising, where was a far reach of fleecy, gold-flecked, piled-up clouds, from behind which the King of Day sent his cohorts, their lances gleaming and sparkling, which they thrust aloft to the zenith, as rank on rank of colour-bearers advanced shaking the reds and yellows and bright gold of their banners against the deep blue of the sky and the towering mountains until they glowed as pink as a rose. In the boundless sea the whole magical picture was reflected as in a looking-glass. What a welcome for mother!

It seemed an age before I could get close to the steamer, there were so many crowding boats and pushing boatmen, and up the companion way to my waiting mother and clasp her in my hungry arms. We both cried when we got under cover away from curious eyes. I was sobbing from sheer joy, when, "Rachel," a voice said near me, "don't you think you had better let me have a chance to greet our mother?"

"Yes, but have you a spare handkerchief? I don't seem to have any," and I threw myself into Denny's arms and cried some more. He held me *tight,* while he looked over my head to mother, and

I know they smiled at my childishness. Then gently releasing me the Dearest Man bent and raised her hand to his lips. She had not spoken, just silently looked at the man who had won her only child's heart, and as he lifted his head, said softly with a certain love note in her voice my heart has ached three years to hear, "My son," and drew his face to hers and kissed him on the lips. His eyes were misty and his voice husky as he replied, "I thank you—mother."

We had a royal welcome when we got home in the afternoon from the children clad in their Sunday best, who lined both sides of the mosaic walk with smiles and flowers, singing a song of happiness and sweet words Miss Dear had prepared. As we passed between their ranks, they salaamed, saying, "Welcome, welcome," and I could see mother's instant surrender to their appeal for her love.

Denny and I took mother all over the house before we let her lay aside her wraps even, and then we had tea on the orange balcony together with a real lovering time. But finally I took her to her room to unpack a little and to rest, for she seemed wearied with all the excitement of getting here and seeing me again.

When I entered my little private sitting room, Denny was waiting for me, arms ready, into which I snuggled in great contentment. "Oh, but it was so long you were away," I told him. "Yes, but it

is the last time, my Rachel. From now on we journey together."

Ah, it is blessed to belong to him who loves and cares so much, and I told him so, his cheek on mine. We have decided to defy fate and be married next Friday. I have not a scrap of superstition in my makeup, neither has Denny. When we found a delayed letter from C. D. in which he said that he and Betty would reach Trablus on Wednesday, it seemed but fair to let them have one day to get their new clothes unpacked before coming on here even though we had set Thursday as the wedding day. Denny will go with Deebna on Thursday to fetch them. Meanwhile, we must get busy filling in the date in the invitations with Tiffany on the flap of the envelopes mother brought. They will not reach all of the friends in time for Friday, but will serve as an announcement of the marriage.

It seems queer to be writing this account of my happenings with mother under my roof, but she requested me to keep on with my diary as long as I am Rachel *Locke,* that she may have the story complete from the beginning.

Paradise, and underscored. Somewhere on the Lebanon.

Rachel Locke is no more, but Rachel Whitelaw is very much in evidence under this pine tree where

she is making a final entry in a Russia leather-bound book.

Finis has been written across my girlhood's story, and I am again facing new horizons which beckon with the fascinating lure of the unknown.

Yesterday—may I never forget one of its happy moments, from your wake-up kiss in the morning, dearest mother, to that rapturous instant when Denny looked at me with a special love-lit smile after the blessing had been said over our bowed heads. Did you notice that he did not kiss me then? That is the regulation thing to do, but as he explained afterwards, *there wasn't time enough.*

Did I really look an up-to-date bride? I might have known you would not let me be married in any make-shift gown. I was glad to wear your very own wedding dress, all freshened up, and to have the same filmy veil on my head that you had on yours. But the tragedy of those slippers. Why did not my feet grow more so as to fill them as yours did on that glad day so long ago? Do you suppose any one noticed my old pumps, chalked for the —nth time? I had to wear them after all. Think what lies before me, please God. No sacrifice of you nor of him who is the light of my eyes. I have you both and here in Syria too.

Last evening after dinner we went out on our private balcony under the beautiful Syrian stars, which seemed brighter than usual, as though sending down to us a special benediction. Up the coast

our eyes travelled, for home, and work and our future lie there. We could see the dim outline of the Masailaha Point, a landmark in our lives, and caught the lights of home as you signalled with the red matches. I could see—almost—Nabeeha holding her blazing love torch, and Bedr and Temam, a little fearful of getting scorched, but most important because I was supposed to be watching for their message away up here. Tiny tokens they were, those bits of colour in the dark of night, but big with meaning to us both, and they glowed and burned in our hearts like the fire they were in reality.

As the last one faded away, I turned to Denny, that is I addressed him, I did not have to turn, he was very close by, for there came flashing in on memory's page, the picture of a girl in Miss Delight's school drawing a map of the Empire on the board. As the outline of Syria grew under her crayon, I heard her say, "And here is Habeebty Sureeyeh."

"Oh, Denny," I exclaimed, "it *is Habeebty Sureeyeh,* is it not, for both of us?" and I stretched out my arms as though to enclose within them the whole land I have grown so to love.

"Beloved Syria? Yes, my Rachel, it *is* our Beloved Syria."

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